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MEMOIRS

OF

HENRY THE GREAT,

AND OF THE

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COURT OF FRANCE

DURING HIS REIGN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LIFE

OF

HENRY THE GREAT

AND

MEMOIRS OF HIS COURT.

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Longueville to Gabrielle d'Etrees.—Melancholy death of the duke.—Politic conduct of the lord d'Etrees in regard to his daughter.—Marriage of Gabrielle, and resistance to her husband.—The king succeeds in obtaining the person of fair Gabrielle, who then becomes his mistress.

IN the progress of our Memoirs we have had occasion to speak of the predilection of Henry the Fourth for the fair sex; and as this passion constituted one of the greatest weaknesses of our hero, it is very slightly touched upon by French biographers. Works, however, exist containing a detail of the intrigues of this monarch; and as it is our intention to give Henry the Great such as he really was, we now deem it necessary to quit for a short period his heroic career, in order to refer to the authorities in question, from whence we shall present a cursory view of his amours until 1590, to which period of his history we have now attained.

It has previously been mentioned, that Catherine de Medicis uniformly had recourse to the beauties of her court, in order to become acquainted with the secrets of the nobility. Of these ladies, so necessary to that politic princess, the lovely madame de Sauvè was the first to captivate the youthful Henry of Navarre. This personage was widow of the secretary of state, and regarded as one of the rarest beauties of the court; but having served the interests of the queen mother on various occasions, she was perfect mistress of intrigue, and in general made

her charms subservient only to the political views of that princess.

After having enslaved the heart of the king of Navarre, madame de Sauve, in obedience to Catherine de Medicis, awakened a passion in the breast of Henry the Third; but the monarch having ascertained her intimacy with his rival, and de Sauve being in the constant habit of visiting young Henry, imbibed a real affection for the latter, which he returned with equal warmth. The violent passion of Henry for this beauty was the cause of his remaining much longer at the court of Henry the Third than he would otherwise have done; and it was the inconstancy of the lady in question that awakened in his breast sentiments which the cooler dictates of reason had never been capable of inspiring. The duke de Guise became enamoured of madame de S[illegible], who returned his tenderness, and insensi[illegible] obliterated from her heart all the affection she [illegible]ad entertained for Henry. This circumst[illegible] combined with futile promises of appointing the king of Navarre to be lieutenant-general of the kingdom, at length roused the prince to action, who in consequence fled the court and his faithless mistress, seeking an asylum in Guienne.

Although we do not wish to offer any palliative for the irregularities of our hero, who was, no doubt, a complete slave to the passion of love; some excuse may, notwithstanding, be offered, when we take into consideration his unfortunate

marriage. Margaret de Valois, queen of Henry of Navarre, was a princess of the most irregular habits, and the worthy daughter of such an intriguing parent as Catherine de Medicis. We learn from history, that she was partial to good musicians, having a very delicate and correct ear: she frequented the society of men of learning and eloquence, because her mind was cultivated, and her conversation agreeable; she was liberal even to prodigality; expensive and magnificent; borrowing money in all directions, but never repaying a farthing. The example of the court, combined with her own natural propensity for voluptuousness and libertinism, rendered Margaret a paragon of impurity, who had, at a very early period, indulged in several intrigues previous to her marriage with the king of Navarre. If we may be permitted to infer that Henry was gifted with delicate sentiments as regards a connexion of the sexes, such a woman was by no means calculated to engage in his affections, but, on the contrary, alienate and disgust her husband; a circumstance that probably contributed to make him seek illicit enjoyments with females less corrupt and more delicate in their amours.

At the court of the king of Navarre established at Agen, nothing was talked of but intrigues and amorous enterprises, queen Margaret being the very soul of that assembly. Henry the Third, her brother, having imbibed a particular hatred for his sister, secretly communicated to Henry

the licentiousness of his wife's conduct, and the scandalous reports that were disseminated respecting her and viscount de Turenne. Henry of Navarre, however, being more occupied with the urgency of his own political affairs than instigated by any other consideration, contented himself with making the letter as public as possible; at the same time having recourse to prayers and caresses, in order to restrain Turenne, who outwardly appeared to accede to his wishes. Margaret, however, exasperated at the proceedings of her husband, and only meditating revenge, followed the line of conduct she had so frequently seen her mother adopt; and in consequence instigated the ladies in her suite to captivate as much as possible all the advisers and brave captains who surrounded the person of her husband. This advice was so artfully instilled, and the ladies so well disposed to profit by it, that Henry himself became enamoured of the charms of the lovely Fosseuse, who but too well put into practice the artful lessons of her mistress.

The queen mother and the Guises, on the one hand, urged Henry the Third to demand restitution of the places provisionally surrendered to the Huguenots, who seemed desirous of declaring war; while on the other hand queen Margaret, who wished for hostilities, set all her enquiries at work with her husband, and contributed in person to urge Henry not to surrender the towns in dispute, but seek his safety in having recourse to arms; and as the ladies were so intimately con-

cerned on this occasion, the hostilities that broke out were entitled at court *The Lovers' War*.

Those, however, who had instigated belligerent operations soon became the mediators for a peace, which proved far more disastrous in its effects than the preceding hostile measures. The courts of Henry the Third and the king of Navarre, as well as the two monarchs themselves, were plunged in sloth and voluptuousness. It is true, the latter was not so completely a slave to pleasures, but he would sometimes direct his attention to public affairs: the veteran captains of the Huguenot party very freely spoke their sentiments, and from time to time awakened him from this inebriating trance. But Henry the Third so completely abandoned himself, as we have previously stated, to effeminate pleasures, that it appeared as if he was divested of heart and of every corporeal energy.

Queen Margaret, weary of residing at a provincial court where she had continued a few years, returned to enjoy the gaieties of Paris; uniformly addicted to intrigues and fomenting discords. Henry the Third, her brother, had despatched a courier with letters for Italy, when the messenger was assassinated on the road and his papers carried off. Margaret was suspected of being the instigator of this deed, and her brother resolved to avenge himself by defaming her: a line of conduct she publicly adopted in regard to his own irregularities. To effect this, Henry the Third seized his opportunity, and openly

censured queen Margaret for her familiarities (not to give them a worse name) with James de Harlai Chauvalon, reproaching her also with having most abandoned females in her retinue; to which he added a command that she should forthwith rejoin her husband Henry of Navarre. Margaret obeyed this order, but was no sooner on her route than she was stopped, by her brother's order, by a captain of his guards, who visited her litter, took off her mask, and seized upon three or four of her male attendants, together with two ladies of her suite, who were immediately conducted to the king. Henry the Third then proceeded to interrogate these persons separately, respecting the life and actions of queen Margaret; after[illegible]he committed them to the Bastille. The [illegible]pressed some disinclination a[illegible]s wife after such a direct insult[illegible]us that, if proved criminal, she sho[illegible]d, or that reparation might be mad[illegible]ase the contrary was the fact; but, as[illegible]ar circumstances power has in general[illegible]idency, he was under the necessity of[illegible]ceiving the insulted Margaret.

Henry the Third having proceeded to Bourdeaux, the king of Navarre repaired to that city, in order to visit him; at which place he became acquainted with the countess de Guiche, widow of count de Grammont. The charms of this lady produced a powerful effect on the mind of Henry, who thus consoled himself for the infide-

lity of madame de Sauve; and it was with this countess, as we have previously remarked, that the king of Navarre kept up a long epistolary correspondence.

During Henry's intercourse with the countess de Guiche, the adverse parties were in arms, war having its sway to avenge particular animosities, as Love his own season for the enjoyment of pleasures. These amorous pursuits, which might prove dangerous to the king of Navarre, were sometimes productive of advantage. The duke de Mayenne, being then in Gascony, and learning that Henry often went to visit the countess de Guiche, conceived that it would not be difficult to surprise him; and in order to effect this, he posted a body of cavalry to in[illegible] the road by which he judge[illegible] arre would pass. But, whet[illegible] to Henry's having received ti[illegible], or that the guards did not s[illegible] their duty, the duke de Mayenn[illegible] wo months in pursuing this useless [illegible], and thereby afforded many towns s[illegible] ne to place themselves in a state of defence. This, however, did not prove the case after t[illegible] battle of Coutras, where Joyeuse was defeated, on which occasion, instead of immediately profiting by his success, he permitted his forces to disband, and notwithstanding the urgent remonstrances of the prince of Condé, Henry only retained five hundred horse, and, accompanied by the count de Soissons, repaired to visit the countess de Guiche, sacrificing the in-

terest of his party to the violent love he entertained for that lady.

During Henry's continuance at La Rochelle, his having seduced the daughter of an officer, was productive of very bad effects towards him in that town, and urged the monarch, as we have stated in the course of our history, to offer a public apology for his conduct in presence of the whole army.

It has been stated of our Henry the Eighth that he spent his life in marrying and procuring divorces from his wives, and it may with equal veracity be said that Henry the Fourth of France passed his days in running from one mistress to another; since, with the exception of the duchess of Beaufort and the marchioness de Verneuil, the passion he entertained for his other mistresses was but of transient duration. Notwithstanding this, the countess de Guiche contributed more than any other female to the advancement of his affairs: she carried on the war in his behalf at her own expense, and forwarded considerable supplies in men and money. It has been affirmed by some writers that the king of Navarre gave the countess de Guiche a promise of marriage, signed with his own blood. However, as love usually diminishes the ardour of passion as soon as a lack of personal charms becomes manifest; this lady growing large and fat, her countenance assuming a very flushed colour, the king became disgusted, and sought elsewhere the means of gratifying his propensity.

It may not be amiss in this place to mention the raillery that passed on the part of the duke of Orleans to the count de Grammont; the former stating that the count was his brother, as the king had slept with the countess his mother. To this count Grammont replied, it was true that the monarch had passed the night with the countess de Guiche, but that a *billet* of wood had been placed between them: in consequence, when the duke of Orleans had occasion to speak of Grammont, he also gave him the nick-name of *Brother Billet.*

Women, says Anquetil, in his Spirit of the League, very rarely pardon an affront offered to their personal charms; and the affections of the countess de Guiche, thus outraged, prompted her to seek an opportunity for revenge, which subsequently presented itself. This lady was well aware how much the king dreaded a union between his sister Catherine and his cousin the count de Soissons; apprehensive lest that young prince, rendered too powerful by such an alliance, should one day endeavour to give the law; while by delaying the nuptials he also calculated on securing to himself partisans in those who should aspire to the hand of Catherine, whose heart was, however, already engaged to Soissons. It was from a knowledge of this mutual sentiment, that the countess de Guiche founded her hopes of vengeance. She, in consequence, became their confidant and adviser, applauded the passion of the young lovers, adding fuel to their

flame, and furnishing the means of carrying on a correspondence in defiance of the king: in short, the countess so far succeeded that they were on the very point of marriage unknown to the monarch. Henry, however, on the eve of its consummation, became acquainted with the fact, having only time to despatch one of his ministers, who happily arrived so opportunely as to break off the intrigue. The king then removed his sister to his own court, and was compelled to adopt very disagreeable precautions as regarded the inimical views of the countess of Guiche: a line of conduct which became the more painful in consequence of Henry's attention being at that period called to political objects of the very highest importance; as Gregory the Fourteenth had just succeeded Urban the Seventh in the pontificate, who pronounced himself a favourer of the League, and a decided opponent to the accession of Henry the Fourth to the throne of France.

Subsequent to the deaths of the duke and cardinal Guise, and after the reconciliation of Henry the Third with the king of Navarre, in order that their combined forces might make head against the League; the latter began to obliterate from his memory the predilection formerly entertained for the countess de Guiche. It was at this period that our hero passing through Normandy first beheld Antoinette de Pons, marchioness of Guercheville, widow of Henry de Silly count de Roche Guyon, by whom she had children, and who was

subsequently married to Charles du Plessis, lord of Liancourt and governor of Paris. Henry, charmed with the fascinations of this lady, became so violently enamoured, that all remaining affection for the countess de Guiche vanished from his mind. The marchioness, independent of youth and beauty, was particularly fascinating in her conversation; she had been educated at the court of Henry the Third, esteemed the most gallant and polite of those days, and possessed all the feminine delicacy which usually distinguishes persons of high rank; whereas the countess, for whom he nevertheless continued to feel esteem, had a provincial air, never having visited the court; though, as regarded birth, they were nearly upon an equality. The king, however, experienced a resistance from the heart of the marchioness, which he had not expected in the first instance. In fact, this lady possessed as much virtue as beauty, and would never accede to gratify the monarch's desires; wherefore, as modesty has something in it that commands respect even from the most licentious, the king, who possessed great qualities, was pleased with the reservedness of her conduct, and felt so charmed as to entertain the idea of making her his queen, after procuring a divorce from Margaret, which he had long meditated. Absence, however, cured Henry of Navarre of this passion, as it had before done of so many others; for his speedy introduction to a new beauty did not afford him leisure to indulge his chagrin

on witnessing the cruelty of the marchioness, nor to call to his remembrance the facilities which had attended his connexion with the countess de Guiche.

Henry the Third and the king of Navarre were occupied in laying siege to Paris, where Mary de Beauvilliers, daughter of count Saint-Aignan, abbess of Montmartre, requested of Henry of Navarre a safe pass through the camp, which was immediately granted by the king. Some days after, this lady presented herself to his majesty in order to return thanks, upon which occasion the abbess conducted herself with so much grace, that finding her beauty and mental acquirements peculiarly fascinating, Henry conceived it would be cruel in the extreme that so lovely a female should be doomed to terminate her life in a cloister. This charming woman, whom the austerities of a conventual life had not rendered obdurate, felt a secret pleasure in observing, that under such disadvantageous apparel, her beauty had still the effect of captivating the king. Henry was not in the habit of stifling a growing passion and remaining satisfied with half measures: he explained his sentiments, was favourably received, and had the gratification to find that his advances would not be unattended by success.

It was at this period the assassination of Henry the Third took place; when, notwithstanding the sorrow felt by the king of Navarre on account of that melancholy catastrophe and the obstacles that he was aware would present themselves to

retard his possession of the throne, he nevertheless was not unmindful of the abbess, his new intended mistress. By Henry's direction, she was conducted to Senlis, a city that had declared itself in his favour; and, having been originally forced to enclose herself in a monastery from circumstances of a family nature, over which she had no control, and thus condemned to a line of life completely opposed to her inclinations, she was overjoyed at finding herself beloved by a prince who had it in his power to restore her to liberty. Thus inauspicious events and the operations of war did not prevent Henry from thinking of love, and seeking mistresses in the seclusion of a convent, with as much ease and tranquillity of mind as if he had been quiet possessor of the throne. In imitation of their master, the major part of Henry's officers being unoccupied, only thought of making similar conquests, from which resulted more pleasure than glory; while such as were unable to pursue the more delicate refinements of love took advantage of the vicinity of Paris, to procure women whose favours were to be purchased, on which account many became infected with disease: so that if the siege had been of longer duration, Paris to all appearance would have proved as fatal to Henry the Fourth, as Capua had been to Annibal and his army.

Notwithstanding the attachment of the king to the beautiful abbess, he did not forget madame de Guercheville, whose merits were well known

to him. That lady having lost her heart, he was desirous of consoling, and giving her a husband, that, by means of the favours he dispensed, she might know the esteem he entertained for her virtue. Henry for this purpose selected Charles du Plessis, lord of Liancourt, count de Beaumont, his first equerry, and governor of Paris; and he in consequence applied to the marchioness in that nobleman's behalf, as he had some time before written when interceding for himself. That prudent lady, who had listened to the king without prejudicing her virtue or giving rise to slander as regarded her honour, frankly accepted the proposal, and continued to preserve the reputation she had acquired in the mind of the monarch; of which he afterwards gave her a signal proof, as, upon his marriage with Mary de Medicis, the marchioness was appointed lady of honour to that princess.

Henry, who made conquests in all directions, was himself frequently subjected to the caprices of love. Having visited several cities, he at length arrived at Mantes, which was the asylum of all the ladies, forming a species of court. The king took infinite delight in beholding such a lovely assemblage; but he was above all gratified in finding many persons of quality whose relatives had been in his service, while others had been known to him at the courts of the sovereigns who had preceded him; and being extremely gallant, he treated them in the most affable manner; the ladies on their side testifying

all the respect due to his rank and high military talents.

One night, as Henry chanced to converse respecting the beauty of the females in question, he did not forget to speak of his favourite abbess, whom he preferred to all others. Roger, duke of Bellegarde, grand equerry of France, and formerly a favourite of Henry the Third, who formed one of the party, stated to the king, that he would change his opinion, had he seen the person of mademoiselle Gabrielle d'Etrees; of whom he spoke in such enthusiastic terms, that Henry felt a strong desire to behold so great a beauty. Gabrielle, in fact, was beloved by Bellegarde; that lady entertaining for him a similar attachment: so pressing, however, was the nature of Henry's affairs at the time, that notwithstanding his anxiety to gratify the curiosity he felt, it was then impossible to effect his design. The king accordingly set out for Senlis, and joined the abbess, with whom he remained for a short period, forgetting, in her society, the wish he had entertained of beholding mademoiselle d'Etrees.

After visiting various towns, Henry at length returned to Mantes; when the duke of Bellegarde demanded permission to go to Cœuvres, a mansion situated between Soissons and Laon, where Gabrielle d'Etrees resided, whom he passionately adored. The duke, for this lady, had quitted madame d'Humieres, to whom he was greatly indebted for numerous services, rendered

during a dangerous illness he had experienced at Mantes, she having also sacrificed admiral de Villars for the duke, who used every endeavour to obtain her love. The king refused his acquiescence with the duke's wishes, unless he was permitted to accompany him; and it was then Bellegarde became aware of his imprudence in having extolled the charms of his mistress in presence of the monarch: it was, however, too late to contradict his former assertions. Being unable to contend against his master's authority, they performed the journey to Cœuvres in company; when the duke had the mortification to find that Henry regarded Gabrielle as even more beautiful and fascinating than he had language to express. Thus Bellegarde, owing to his indiscreet conduct, became the instrument of his own misfortune; for the king interdicted him from having any further intercourse with his mistress, while he at the same time hazarded the friendship of his master and his own fortune.

Gabrielle d'Etrées was daughter of John Anthony d'Etrées, marquis of Cœuvres, and Frances Babou de la Bourdaisiere. Gabrielle, who was afterwards regarded as the most lovely female at court, visited Mantes by desire of the king. While continuing in that town, she made another conquest, by captivating Henry d'Orleans, duke de Longueville; depriving madame d'Humieres of that prince, by whom she had been previously beloved. Longueville had been desirous of consoling madame d'Humieres for the loss of Belle-

garde, who was allowed to be one of the handsomest-formed men at court; but the former did not prove more faithful than her first admirer; since mademoiselle d'Etrées so completely enslaved the mind of the duke, that he used every possible endeavour to obtain her love; while the king was occupied in completing the destruction of the League. Henry, who was compelled to be long absent, felt no diminution of the love with which Gabrielle had inspired him; on the contrary, upon his return, his attachment increased, and in consequence, assuming the authoritative tone of a master, he declared that no one should participate with him in the favours of mademoiselle d'Etrées. The duke de Longueville was in despair, while Bellegarde, if possible, felt his loss more acutely: the hopes of the former might be unfounded, whereas the latter saw himself obliged to relinquish a heart of which he was already the possessor.

There was, however, no remedy; obedience became indispensably necessary; at least, Bellegarde promised compliance with every wish of his sovereign; but whether or not he faithfully kept his word will, in the sequel, become manifest. Bellegarde, however, complained to his mistress in the most touching language, who equally partook of his affliction. As women are more violent than men in displaying their passions, mademoiselle d'Etrées was not so guarded as her lover in testifying her emotions; acquainting the monarch, with great warmth of temper, that she did not conceive her affections were to be con-

trolled; that violent measures would only create her contempt and hatred, if she was prevented from uniting herself to a man whose addresses were sanctioned by her parents. Her chagrin, in short, went to such a length that she quitted Mantes without taking leave of the king, and returned into Picardy.

A resistance so determined tended only to increase the passion of Henry, who was as much afflicted by the rage as the absence of his mistress. The difficulty then was to procure a sight of her, as he could not proceed to Cœuvres without great personal danger. It was requisite to travel more than seven leagues through an enemy's country, to traverse a forest, and pass in view of two garrisons belonging to the League. If he proceeded in company, his passion would be made public, and thus increase the anger of Gabrielle; to go unattended would be too great an exposure, as the country was covered with troops of the enemy; and there appeared no means of obtaining advice, for, thus circumstanced, no one was capable of deciding the mode of conduct which ought to be pursued. These obvious impediments reduced the monarch to a state of despair; and as moderate desires become more violent in proportion to the impediments they have to encounter, the king, who was already too much the slave of his passion, resolved to hazard every thing. Accompanied, therefore, by some chosen officers, he mounted his horse and proceeded four leagues in their company, upon

which, being then within three leagues of Cœuvres, he dismounted, and assuming the costume of a peasant, placed a sack filled with straw upon his shoulders, and in this singular manner proceeded on foot to the residence of his fair, for there was nothing Henry would not undertake when love impelled him to action. The king was sometimes actuated by desires which terminated in a single night; but when his passions were roused by beauties who touched his heart, his love became ridiculous, and in these violent transports he resembled nothing so little as the noble and warlike Henry the Great. Fabulous history depicts Hercules as wielding the distaff to gratify his beloved Omphale: however, the adventure of the countryman's disguise and the sack full of straw is still more ignoble. During Henry's connexion with the marchioness of Verneuil he would frequently continue before her on his knees for a length of time, tamely submitting to her disdain and the opprobrious epithets she thought fit to utter against him.

This singular journey was attended with very ill success; mademoiselle d'Etrées happened to be with her sister, madame de Villars, at the window of a gallery, which commanded a fine view of the surrounding country, and she beheld this illustrious countryman arrive; when, not expecting an adventure of so extraordinary a nature, she took the monarch for the character he had assumed. No sooner had Henry gained the court-yard of the castle than he threw aside his

sack, and, without enquiring after any one, mounted direct to the gallery where he had seen his mistress. It is needless to enquire whether Gabrielle d'Etrées felt astonished on beholding the king in garments that accorded so ill with his dignity: instead of entering into a detail of the dangers he had run upon her account, the civilities she manifested on addressing him did not prevent her from displaying an air of marked disdain. Gabrielle continued but a few moments with the king, and that period of time was employed by her in stating that his appearance was such that she could not endure his presence: so true is it that aversion poisons every thing, rendering odious that which it is our interest to cherish; all becomes displeasing in those whom we do not love, whereas defects are tolerated where affection has control. Had Bellegarde performed the same exploit, for Gabrielle, he certainly would have been welcomed in a far different manner. In short, she told the king in very unceremonious terms that he ought to change his apparel; and then suddenly retired, leaving her sister to offer apologies for the little civility she had displayed towards the monarch.

Henry's absence created great alarm throughout the army; no one could conceive what was become of him, and, even supposing the journey to Cœuvres had been detailed, it would not have been believed. Henry could obtain nothing from Gabrielle d'Etrées, and his continuance at the castle was consequently of very short duration;

wherefore he returned to his army, where his wished-for presence reanimated the hopes of the soldiery. The ill-success of the king's journey was, however, legibly imprinted on his countenance, and his affliction was so apparent that it might have been imagined he had lost one-half of his kingdom. Having at length got the better of his melancholy, he once more applied himself to his affairs; yet, however ungrateful mademoiselle d'Etrées proved, the recollection of her still continued to haunt his imagination. Henry could not conceive how so beautiful a creature should act with such cruelty, and still hoped that in the end he might be able to get the better of her obduracy. In order to effect this purpose, and obviate the danger that attended his obtaining a personal interview with Gabrielle, the king signified to her father, then governor of the Isle of France, that he nominated him to be one of his privy counsellors, desiring that he would repair to take possession of his post, and conduct with him his whole family to the city of Mantes.

The sequel proved that Henry had wisely judged, and that there are few beauties who are proof against a royal lover. The elevation of the marquis d'Etrées, and the favours daily received from the king, rendered the heart of Gabrielle less inhuman, and compelled her to behave with more kindness towards a prince who was so liberal to her family. Henry, unfortunately, had little leisure to profit by the change and enjoy

the sunshine of her smiles; for, being constantly on horseback either to execute some design against the enemies, or to oppose them in combat, that cruel necessity constantly tore him away from the presence of his beloved.

Mademoiselle d'Etrées, desirous of losing nothing, and regarding a plurality of admirers as a proof of the greatest merit, and an advantage that enhances the reputation of beauty, still continued to cherish her love for Bellegarde, when the king was absent, and equally listened to the tender advances of the duke de Longueville, to whom she wrote, and received letters in reply; however, no sooner had the king arranged his state affairs than he dispersed his rivals, disdaining to share with any one that heart of which he conceived himself alone to be worthy.

The duke de Longueville was the most resigned, and did not shew too much repugnance in sacrificing his love to his fortune. He was the first to break off all connexion, by soliciting that his mistress would terminate an intercourse which might prove fatal to both; he further requested she would return his letters, and promised to restore those which he had received from herself. Mademoiselle d'Etrées felt no disinclination to terminate an intrigue which in reality was not very dear to her, and the day was fixed upon when the letters were to be mutually given up. Gabrielle was faithful to her promise, and delivered every thing she had received; but the duke did not conduct himself with the same sin-

cerity, withholding the most tender communications, hoping by that means to keep her in a state of dependence. Madèmoiselle d'Etrées felt very indignant at this treacherous conduct, and firmly resolved to avenge herself; in which determination she succeeded but too well, since her influence with Henry proved so great, that the duke was deprived of some dignities, and ultimately killed by a musquet ball upon his entrance into Dourlens, by a soldier of the garrison, when a volley was being fired off in honour of his arrival. The demise of that prince was accounted for in various ways, and with that degree of uncertainty with which the fatal deaths of exalted personages are usually distinguished. Some stated that it originated in the vengeance of Gabrielle d'Etrées, and went so far as to assert, that she caused the shot to be fired; and, to speak candidly, there was too much appearance of truth in the assertion.

Although the king was careful of money, such was not the case as regarded his mistresses, towards whom he had never the least reserve. It was essentially necessary to the monarch that the marquis de Cœuvres should reside at court; neither did he spare any pains to retain him there. That nobleman, well aware that his wife had produced him a numerous family of daughters, whose conduct had not been very correct, and having no great reason to suppose that Gabrielle d'Etrées would prove the only Lucretia of his family, looked upon the benefits received

from his monarch as a prelude to the illustrious ruin intended for his daughter. The marchioness, his wife, a very dissolute woman, had fled for refuge to the province of Auvergne, followed by the marquis d'Allegre, with whom she lived in open adultery, without heeding the scandal which her conduct occasioned. The marquis however, who possessed honourable sentiments, feeling desirous to avoid the accusation of being personally instrumental in ruining his daughter's reputation, and in order to dispense with the charge of watching over her conduct, resolved to dispose of the fair Gabrielle in marriage. Having thus decided, he fixed his eyes upon Nicholas Dumersal, lord de Liancourt, a gentleman of illustrious birth and great riches, but, in other respects, deficient as to intellect and remarkably plain in person.

Mademoiselle d'Etrées was well acquainted with that nobleman, and might, had it been required, have given a detail of all his infirmities; she, however, consented to the nuptials, in the hope of thereby escaping the importunate cares of her father. Independent of this, Gabrielle had exacted of the king that he would prevent a consummation of the marriage rites. She protested her unalterable fidelity to the prince, solemnly vowing not to prove faithless but at the last extremity, and in consequence made Henry swear, that he would come to her assistance on the day of marriage, and convey her to some place of safety where she could only see her husband when

the king pleased. Henry, who never neglected love affairs, bore his promise in mind, but found it impossible to repair to the place appointed. The newly married fair, however, witnessed the arrival of the fatal hour which was to consign her person to the hideous wretch selected for her husband; when, not beholding the royal lover who was to rescue her from a danger she dreaded as much as death, she felt anguish in her soul at his extraordinary negligence, resolved to avenge herself, and summoned all her energies to support with courage those attacks to which her person might be subjected. Gabrielle was fully aware that she must solely depend upon her own resolution, in which she remained so firm as to repulse all the efforts of her husband, who could never prevail upon her to enter the bed, notwithstanding his threats and repeated supplications. On the ensuing day he conducted his wife to his own mansion, hoping to meet with better success in a place of which he was master: this precaution, however, was equally unattended by success; for Gabrielle took care to invite all the relatives and friends who had assisted at the nuptials, whom she retained until the monarch should arrive to rescue her from her detested situation.

The king, who calculated the moments, and in all probability pronounced maledictions on those state affairs which the possession of a crown heaped upon him, at length arrived at the neighbouring city, and summoned Liancourt to attend his person; when the accommodating husband

was so kind as to conduct his wife thither also, hoping to augment his fortune in consequence of the love which the king entertained towards her. He no sooner arrived than the monarch proceeded to lay siege to Chartres, when we are not informed what became of Liancourt; but his wife followed Henry, accompanied by her sister and one of her cousins. As the siege was of long duration, the monarch had sufficient time to send for Elizabeth de Babou, wife of Francis d'Escoubleau, marquis de Sourdis, the aunt of Gabrielle d'Etrées, in order that she might fill the post of her governess. The marchioness, who was cunning and wily in every thing appertaining to gallantry, instilled such good lessons into the mind of her niece, that she acquired complete ascendency over the monarch's will by her flattering attentions, and obtained for the marquis de Sourdis the government of Chartres after the surrender of that city, which post he had formerly enjoyed, but had been displaced from thence by the chiefs of the League.

CHAPTER XII.

The duke of Nevers and Biragué join Henry's party.—Situation of armies of the king and the duke of Parma.—Loss of Lagny—Henry encamps at Creil—Cruelties of the prince of Parma at Corbeil, who retires to the Low Countries.—State of the French provinces at the close of 1590.*—Mode adopted by Henry to instal Lesdiguieres in the government of Dauphiny.—Death of Pope Sixtus the Fifth, and nomination of Gregory the Fourteenth to the papal chair.—Female heroism.—Bravery of De Vic and death of D'Aumale.—Endeavour to seize upon Paris, called the Day of Flour.—Surrender of Chartres, and Henry's pertinent observation.—La Fère and Noyon taken.—Sarcastic productions against the League.—Escape of the duke of Guise.—Manifesto issued by the Pope against Henry.—His bull unattended to, and dispersion of his army.—Dissensions between the Catholic and Protestant royalists.—Henry and marshal Biron.—Cruel conduct of the Sixteen.—Marriage of Turenne, and his bridal present to the king.—Henry lays siege to Rouen.—His chivalric affair at Aumale.—The king wounded.—Admiration inspired throughout Europe by Henry's bravery.—The king raises the siege of Rouen.—Plans pursued by the king to ruin the prince of Parma and his army.—Defeat of the duke of Guise.—Escape of Farnese and his whole army at Caudebec.—Disunion among the king's officers highly prejudicial to his interests.—Villars compelled to raise the siege of Quillebeuf.—Death of marshal de Biron.—Views of the court of Spain, and discontent of Mayenne.—Death of the prince of Parma.—Opening of the states general to elect a catholic king.—Henry despatches a trumpeter to Mayenne with propo-*

sitions.—Mayenne concludes a truce with Henry.—Account of the work entitled Satire Menippée, or, Catholicon d'Epagne.—Henry repairs to Mantes to be instructed in the tenets of Catholicism.—Henry abandons the Calvinist persuasion, and pronounces his profession of faith at the portal of the church of Saint Denis.

THE raising of the siege of Paris, which might be deemed very detrimental to the interests of the king, was, on the contrary, productive of one good effect; namely, the bringing back to their duty many powerful individuals who had previously advocated the cause of the League. As it had never been imagined that the magnanimity of Henry would prompt him, from motives of commiseration, to relinquish such an important conquest, the surrender of the capital had long been regarded as a certainty. In consequence, those persons, who until that period remained neuter or irresolute, espoused the party which fortune seemed inclined to favour, some from motives of ambition, and others excited by sincere admiration for the conduct of the king. Among the latter was Louis de Gonzagues, duke de Nevers, who no longer deceived as to the ambitious motives that instigated the chiefs of the League, voluntarily sought an audience with the king, not only refusing the offers of recompense which the latter freely tendered, but proffering his fortune, that was immense, to forward Henry's views, the major part of which he employed in his service. Chiverney, a man of great talents, who, after the death of Biragues, had been ap-

pointed chancellor by Henry the Third, also abandoned the League in order to espouse the royal cause. The king on being joined by this sage counsellor expressed himself in these terms: "*Love me in like manner as I do you, and believe that I am desirous we should live together as if you were my father and my preceptor.*"

Henry having learnèd that the prince of Parma was in the environs of Meaux, marched in that direction, ordering his light cavalry to advance as far as Claye, at which place the two camps were so near each other that skirmishes very frequently took place.

When the duke of Parma was within two days' journey of the above city, says Perefixe, he made known to the king that the duke of Mayenne could not treat with his majesty but in conjunction with himself. Upon this, Henry's council was much astonished and very irresolute as to the conduct necessary to be pursued. It was, no doubt, disgraceful for the king, and a stain upon the reputation of his military prowess, that he had been compelled to raise the siege of Paris after carrying it on for four months; and it could be no less displeasing to the prince, who was brave and fond of glory, to be under the necessity of retiring on the very eve of its surrender, as the possession of the capital must have proved a death-blow to the League.

The post which the king had chosen was excellent; but, owing to the representations of marshal Birón, Henry, though in opposition to

his own opinion, left it in order to occupy that of Chelles. Nearly all the commanders judged that the latter post was better calculated to close up the route for Paris to the hostile general, on which city the royalists had still their views. In consequence a correspondence was kept up in the hope of coming to terms, which the prince of Parma would have put a stop to had he entered the capital, and which ultimately failed without any intervention upon his part. The forces of the king were stationed upon a height, only presenting a deep valley and marshy ground on the one side, which left him no opportunity of acting in that direction; wherefore the prince of Parma, on witnessing this movement, proceeded to encamp his forces on the opposite eminence. Neither his plan nor his interest was to risk a battle, but to keep the monarch in check; and his situation in every respect seconded such an intention, being shielded from insult, and beyond the reach of cannon-shot. Henry immediately felt aware of the fault which his deference for the opinions of others had led him to commit, and the duke of Parma, watching his movements, and not conceiving it expedient to give battle, encamped himself in such a manner, says Perefixe, that he had no apprehension of being forced. Farnese even boasted that Henry would not be able to compel him to fire a single pistol-shot; and that, notwithstanding, he would take possession of a city under his eyes, and thus open a passage, by means of the

river, so as to furnish provisions to Paris. In fact, Farnese actually performed every thing he had predicted; the king finding it impossible to bring him to battle; while the former took Lagny on the Marne without Henry's being able to succour the place. By this means Paris was completely delivered, receiving on the following day quantities of provisions of every description, sent by boats to succour the capital.

We are given to understand from Cayet and others, that the prince, being desirous of seeing Paris, repaired thither *incognito*, and that during his first interview with the duke of Mayenne he made this remark, "*The king of Navarre destroys more boots than shoes, and he will be sooner ruined by delays and temporizing than by force of arms.*"

This event, combined with the raising of the siege of Paris, very sensibly affected the king, because he felt that it might from thence be inferred that he was inferior to his enemy in military capacity, which he justly conceived a subject of the highest importance in pursuing warlike tactics. Had he permitted the duke de Mayenne, whom he had so frequently beaten, to gain such an advantage, it would have been but a slight reverse of fortune; but it became a very serious disadvantage when encountering a prince whom he had never met before, and whose talents were extolled by the adverse faction with all the exaggeration of party spirit, having been announced beforehand as the greatest general that had ever existed. The leaguers, in consequence, vaunted

this primary success to the skies, as if the prince of Parma had gained the most brilliant and decisive victory. Totally unmindful of the various gallant exploits of the king, they represented him as being deficient in talent, and predicted that he would speedily be cut off, hemmed in, surrounded, and compelled to surrender. It is thus hatred and presumption uniformly proceed to extremes, never recollecting that the first event which tends to belie such prophecies, reinstates the hero in public opinion, whom it was intended to debase; while it wrests from his adversary, so foolishly exalted, one half of the merits he really possessed. Henry, whose firmness never degenerated into obstinacy, decided on pursuing the only steps it was necessary he should adopt; he abandoned altogether his views upon the capital, broke up the encampment at Chelles, and retired to the river Oise, taking a position at Creil, where, without giving Farnese any breathing time, he left him to consume himself by slow degrees.

The prince of Parma laid siege to Corbeil, which place, commanded by Rigaut for the king, made a very determined resistance, that officer stopping the march of the Spanish army for three weeks before the town; Rigaut was, however, killed by a cannon-ball, and the place then taken by assault; when the conqueror conducted himself with disgusting barbarity. In order to avenge the deaths of an immense number of offi-

cers and soldiers, among whom was the marquis de Renty, one of the most experienced Spanish generals, Farnese caused the whole garrison to be cut in pieces; and the inhabitants, who had unwillingly submitted to the arms of Henry, being for the most part leaguers, were nevertheless treated with the greatest inhumanity. This sanguinary exploit, so dearly purchased, terminated the conquests of the prince of Parma, who in the month of November took the road to the Low Countries, when he had the chagrin to learn, four days afterwards, that the French, more expeditious than himself in belligerent enterprises, had retaken the town of Corbeil; while Givri, Marivaut, and Parabere, who were at Meulan with a small body of royalist troops, took possession of that town, and put to the sword the whole Spanish garrison left in the place.

The prince of Parma wisely conceived that with such an adversary as Henry, his retreat could not be effected without impediments; and he, in consequence, adopted all the precautions which prudence suggested. He could not, however, prevent the king, by a number of attacks and partial encounters, from sometimes carrying off whole bodies of troops, that frequently reduced him to the verge of ruin. The most conspicuous feat of this description took place on crossing the river Aisne; upon which occasion marshal Biron advanced so far amidst the enemy's

battalions that he must have perished, had not the king, who witnessed the imminent danger, flown to his succour, accompanied by all the officers who surrounded his person. Henry in this instance made such a resolute attack that he succeeded in extricating Biron from his perilous situation, at the very moment when he was on the point of yielding to such superiority of numbers. This march added greatly to Henry's military reputation, and alluding to this Sully states as follows: "The manner in which the king was enabled to render an army useless which had entered France with the idea of conquering the country; his boldness in attacking a powerful opponent, and his skill in profiting by every advantage that presented itself, afforded a subject for the admiration of all men skilled in the art of war, and even astonished the faculties of those unacquainted with military tactics."

This conduct, which completely demonstrated that Henry united in himself all the talents of a warrior in the highest degree, inspired his party with fresh energies. Many cities voluntarily opened their gates, so that the leaguers must then have foreseen that they could merely delay the overthrow of their party, as it was no longer possible to prevent such a result.

When the king had harassed and driven Farnese as far as the frontiers of Picardy, he relinquished the pursuit, and marched back to Saint Quentin, which town had freely surrendered to him.

The prince of Parma's expedition to France, however, considerably retarded the affairs of the king, according to Perefixe, though they did not advance the interests of Mayenne, but, on the contrary, tended to disunite his affairs, and terminated in their ruin; for, Farnese, aware of the faults committed by the duke, made known to the Spanish court, that he was ill-calculated to forward its interests, being too weak, and not invested with sufficient authority to keep together such a powerful faction as the League. The prince of Parma therefore gave it as his advice, that the king of Spain should become chief of the leaguers, and assume absolute sway; to effect which it was necessary he should gain over the clergy and inhabitants of the great cities, who felt much disposed to change their government, the former reigns having proved so burthensome to the people, that there would be little difficulty in combining towns together to form cantons, or elect a king, with such limited powers as to incapacitate them from levying heavy taxes, or putting armies constantly on foot.

This advice coinciding with the secret views of Philip the Second, he formed the idea of changing France into a Republic, or nominating a king who should act only from his will; and in consequence the Spanish monarch no longer regarded Mayenne as he had formerly done, and gave him very feeble assistance, fomenting, however, the factious in the cities, and particularly the

Council of Sixteen at Paris, by means of gold. In doing this, adds Perefixe, Spain lavished such immense sums, that if she had done as much in maintaining armies, the major part of the kingdom must have been subdued to Philip's authority.

Before we enter into a detail of the events that occurred in the year 1591, it may be necessary to give a cursory view of the state of the provinces towards the close of the preceding year. The duke de Nevers, to whom Henry had confided the government of Champaine, kept that province to its duty, and drove from the territory the duke of Lorraine.

By the sage conduct of marshal D'Aumont, Poitou was almost entirely brought to submission.

The duke de Mercœur uniformly continued encamped in Brittany at the head of the League, but with the intention, which he no longer concealed, of rendering himself independent sovereign of that province.

The duke of Savoy was desirous of annexing to the usurped marquisate of Saluces the territories of Provence and Dauphiny. He had already got possession of Provence; but he found the most determined resistance in Dauphiny, where Lesdiguieres commanded for the king. In all the encounters he discomfited the duke as a skilful and brave general, expelled him from that province; drove out, or subjected all the leaguers; and having rendered himself master of

Grenoble, obliged the inhabitants of that important city to recognize Henry for their lawful king. As soon as Lesdiguieres found himself in quiet possession of the whole territory, he despatched Saint-Julien, his secretary, to the king, in order to remind him of his promise given the preceding year, that he should be nominated to the government of Dauphiny, if he could render himself master of that province. Henry desired nothing better than to perform his engagement; but Lesdiguieres being a protestant, he was aware that great difficulties would in consequence intervene, as there was no doubt but the catholics would oppose the most obstinate resistance. The king, therefore, told Saint-Julien that his employer must have a little patience, that he was on the point of convening his council, and instructed him in the reply he was to make, in case the council should be adverse to his wishes. The affair being thus preconcerted between Henry and Saint-Julien, the latter delivered the despatches of Lesdiguieres to the members of the council, concealing that which recalled to the king's recollection the promise, conditionally made by the monarch, which would have irritated the catholics; and the more so, as the king, uniformly faithful to his word, could not have subjected the matter to any deliberation, if it was required that a promise previously made was to be punctually adhered to. In consequence of this, the affair was canvassed over

in the light of a mere pretension advanced by Lesdiguieres, only founded on the last services he had rendered the monarch. All the catholic members, with the exception of Biron, violently opposed the wishes of Lesdiguieres, alleging with vehemence, that in the treaty entered into between the king and the catholic peers who had recognized him after the death of Henry the Third, it was expressly stipulated, that the governments which should be brought to the royal subjection were to be confided to catholics. Henry replied, that he would uniformly abide by such engagement, when he in person became the master of any provinces; but that he who effected the conquest in spite of so many dangers and difficulties, should always merit the preference, be his religion what it might; upon which the clamours of the papists were redoubled. Henry, who almost uniformly acceded to the unanimous voice of his council, remained silent, and the claims of Lesdiguieres were refused. Saint-Julien, who had been present at these debates, made a profound bow, and retired; but re-entering a few minutes after, he spoke as follows:—"Gentlemen, your unexpected answer led me to forget one thing; which is, that since you do not think proper to confide the government of Grenoble to my employer, you must adopt the means of forcibly taking it from him." And without adding another word to this speech, previously dictated by the king, he re-

tired from the council-chamber. The assembly was struck dumb with astonishment; when the king and marshal Biron took advantage of the moment to speak with more energy concerning the weighty services which Lesdiguieres had rendered the protestants. The noble impartiality of the marshal, in advocating the cause, silenced those catholics who were most attached to the interests of their religion; and immediately after the brevet of governor was drawn out and expedited to Lesdiguieres.

The principal military exploits of this year were all glorious to the monarch, and favourable to his cause; for the dismemberment of provinces, accomplished by the dukes of Lorraine and Savoy, were not prejudicial, because they were diametrically opposed to the interests of the League. The factious, finding themselves dispossessed of those territories, by the enterprises of the above princes, formed a *Third Party*, which, not daring as yet to declare for the king, nevertheless seceded from the League, awaiting only a favourable occasion to proclaim him their legitimate prince. The termination of civil commotions may be ascertained as soon as one of the contending parties is disunited. Forces that are divided become of no utility; enthusiasm no longer exists in those who abandon their first leaders, by whom they were seduced; and in consequence, they pretended less to form a new party, than secure

themselves from danger: such was a species of armed neutrality, which is easily broken up upon the ratification of a permanent peace.

To the other events which characterized the year 1590, may be added that of the death of pope Sixtus the Fifth; whose duplicity and artifice were the result of his mind more than his inherent character: he left five millions of gold, which he had amassed in the church treasury. This pontiff had never concealed his admiration of Elizabeth of England, of whom he stated, "*Che era un gran cervello di principessa:*" while the character of Henry the Great equally called forth his eulogiums; in addition to which, it is well known, that he had resolved to unite with both, in order to overturn the projects of the League, and moderate the ambitious pretensions of Philip the Second of Spain. The demise of pope Sixtus proved a great misfortune to Henry, who was very much afflicted at the event, and was heard to exclaim, when the news was communicated to him, "*There is a stroke of Spanish policy; I have lost a pope who was every thing to me.*" Gregory the Fourteenth was the next occupant of the papal chair.

It is worthy remark, that during great national events, and particularly in civil commotions, the public mind experiences a kind of supernatural energy, which, in every faction, effaces all the variety of characters, and the various ideas of social connexion. The courage of maintaining

at any price a particular opinion, then becomes the only true virtue; any one who attains to that exalted state is regarded in the eyes of his party as a being the most perfect, be the age or the sex whatsoever it may. During all disastrous public events, the most astonishing women have figured on the scene, either for audacity, sanguinary cruelty, or a courage amounting to heroism. The duchess of Montpensier, so frequently alluded to in the faction of the League, was rendered famous for the infuriate line of conduct she pursued; nor was the party of Henry without its heroines, since enthusiasm in such a cause could only tend to elevate the soul.

A female at the close of this year performed an action well worthy to be recorded. Saland, marquis de Bourbon, governor of Montargis in behalf of the League, besieged in her castle of Chatillon sur l'Ain, Margaret d'Ailly, wife of Francis de Coligny, who was then with the army of the king. Saland had already got possession of the village and the base court of the castle; but the courageous wife of Chatillon, placing herself at the head of a small band of soldiers left for her defence, made a sortie upon the assailants, killing a part, driving away the others, recovering the booty with which they had loaded several carts, and making Saland prisoner, of whom she exacted a very heavy ransom.

At the commencement of 1591, another heroine gave proofs of equal intrepidity; accord-

ing to Mezeray, La Châtre, an advocate for the League, with two thousand men, laid siege to the small town of Aubigny near Sancerre, where, having effected a breach, he on the third day attempted to take the place by assault. The garrison, consisting only of eight hundred men, animated by the heroic language of Catherine de Balzac, widow of the duke of Lenox, a female as generous as she was beautiful, overthrew the rebels, and assailed the enemies with so much vigour, that they were driven into their encampments, by which means the place was saved; for La Châtre, having received advice that a considerable body of royalist noblemen were hastening to the assistance of the town, did not think fit to await their arrival, but broke up his encampment and disappeared.

The year began by a vigorous action that proved advantageous to the royal cause, and particularly honourable to Dominic de Vic, surnamed captain Sared, the same warrior who, notwithstanding his wooden leg, displayed such courage and activity at the battle of Ivry.

The knight D'Aumale, was one of the most intrepid combatants for the League, which had entitled him to the surname of the *lion rampant*, to express the mixture of courage, meanness, and ferocity, that formed his character. He resolved to retake Saint-Denis, which was placed under the governance of De Vic, who was incessantly on horseback, seizing the convoys that

were sent for provisioning Paris. D'Aumale some time before had plundered the abbey of Saint Anthony, where he was guilty of such atrocious excesses, that, Mezeray states, it is impossible for any pen to trace the detail. After having committed every cruelty that can be pictured to the imagination, he bore away the sacred vessels and church ornaments, which Henry the Fourth and the Huguenots had respected and preserved during the siege of Paris. The knight D'Aumale and count Belin, governor of Paris, left the city at two o'clock in the morning, with two hundred horse and eight hundred foot, proceeding in the greatest silence, and thus gaining possession of one of the gates of Saint-Denis, which they broke down, and entered the town with their followers, who ran through the streets exclaiming, *Kill, kill; long live D'Aumale!* De Vic was awakened at the noise; but as he uniformly slept in his clothes and with his wooden leg, springing from the bed, he mounted his horse, having always day and night two steeds ready saddled in the stable. Followed only by twelve guards, his attendants armed, and a trumpeter, he took his station before the monastery of Saint-Denis, convinced that D'Aumale would proceed in that direction for the purpose of plunder; having commanded the troops of the garrison to steal gently along, close to the walls of the town, in order to get possession of the gate which had been forced by the enemy. D'Aumale, as ex-

pected, presented himself in order to force the abbey, where he received the just punishment for his flagrant iniquities; his followers being cut to pieces, and himself slain upon the spot: as a recompense for which gallant exploit, Henry, by way of remuneration, gave the son of De Vic the abbey du Bec which had belonged to D'Aumale.

About the same period the king also endeavoured to seize upon Paris; which exploit was denominated *the Day of Flour*, because it was undertaken by officers disguised as countrymen, who, conducting asses, carts, and horses laden with flour, demanded to be received into the city. Their design was to have blocked up the gateway, and get possession of the guard-house, entrenching themselves there until the arrival of the forces purposely stationed in the suburbs to yield timely assistance; but, as they appeared in too great numbers, that circumstance awakened suspicion, and they were refused admittance. Notwithstanding this they continued to insist; and during the altercation the Parisians flew to arms. Henry, having only taken his measures to accomplish a surprise, did not judge it expedient to hazard an attack; and in consequence retired with his troops. The least check experienced by the royal party was celebrated by the rebels as a decisive victory; and *the Day of Flour* in consequence gave rise to numerous pasquinades disseminated by the League; however, this unfortunate enterprise was followed by more fatal con-

sequences, as it furnished a pretext for the factions to introduce a Spanish garrison into the city, a dangerous expedient, that the wisest of the party had uniformly refused to adopt; upon this occasion, however, the plan was resorted to, which very much retarded the surrender of the capital.

For this disgrace the king consoled himself by taking the city of Chartres, which made such a vigorous defence that he was on the point of abandoning the siege after attempting two assaults. The chancellor Chiverney advising the king to make a third essay, the monarch replied, "*Go, then, yourself; I am not in the habit of dealing so cheaply with the blood of my nobility and my soldiers.*" In fact, the prince, who was accustomed to expose his own person with blameable rashness, uniformly spared the blood of his followers, as much as lay in the power of a general at the head of his army. He was equally the father of his troops as of his subjects; and he conceived that to spare the effusion of human blood was one of the most essential qualities of a great captain.

The count de Chatillon, son of admiral Coligny, arrived at the camp with a body of cavalry; he was the officer best instructed in the science of mathematics, as applicable to warfare. This captain invented a bridge, by means of which the besiegers could descend into the moat, and mount to the assault under cover; the whole machine

being constructed in a few days under his direction; and no sooner was it put into effect than the besieged, unable longer to resist the attack, capitulated. The king, on entering the city, which had opposed so much resistance, was stopped by a deputation of the inhabitants: when the magistrate who served as spokesman on the occasion, pronounced an harangue as long as it was misapplied, considering the rebellious sentiments the populace had manifested; for, among other assertions, he stated that the city was under the king's subjection by divine and human right; upon which Henry interrupted the speaker with this pertinent remark, "*Add thereto, by the right of cannon,*" and then spurred on his horse.

The victor, who always preferred to become possessed of places by means of negotiations rather than by force of arms, in order to spare the lives of his subjects, had vainly flattered himself with possessing La Fère in a similar manner, which town he was, however, compelled to secure partly by surprise and partly by force: he arrived there at full gallop, crying out, "*Good terms of composition for worthy people.*" He prohibited pillage, but could not altogether succeed, as the officers and soldiers were resolved to liquidate the demands that were due to them by sharing a portion of the plunder of that city, one of the most wealthy in the kingdom.

Noyon, which had been invested by Biron, was also captured by the king. The duke de

Mayenne and D'Aumale, constable of the League, who had advanced to succour that place, permitted it, using Sully's expression, *to be taken under their very beards.* The forces of Mayenne and D'Aumale were defeated in various encounters, while viscount de Tavannes, who commanded a body of troops for the League, was made prisoner, and the duke d'Aumale compelled to fly; after which Mayenne collected the residue of his routed forces. The duke, however, did not dare advance to the assistance of Noyon, fearful of being compelled to give battle. Henry, on the ensuing day, at the head of his cavalry, and followed by his army, gaily remarked to his officers, "*M. de Mayenne is so near us that we should be looked upon as wanting in politeness, if we did not proceed to visit him, in order to inquire after his health.*" The king proceeded direct to Ham, in which place Mayenne continued shut up; and Henry, not having sufficient forces to besiege the town, retired, satisfied with ascertaining that his opponents, although in sufficient force, did not dare risk a battle.

This disgraceful campaign of the rebels furnished the faction of *the Politics* and the partisans of the king with an inexhaustible source for epigrams and witty songs. The best of those that appeared is the following, which we have Anglicised as near the original as possible; but in order to understand the composition perfectly, it must be remarked that *Tremont* was a captain of

Mayenne's guard; *Balagny* ran away at the affair of Senlis; *Congi* had the reputation of being a coward; and *Chamois* and *Meneville* were killed:

Nature accords to every one
For his assistance feet,
Which rescue those who choose to run:
'Tis safe to scamper fleet.

Aumale, that prince with valour drunk,
For having run so well,
Although in fight he lost his trunk,
Evaded death's dire spell.

When city's gates you open find,
Least blame awaits your stay;
Ne'er think of being left behind,
'Tis best to run away.

The swift of foot deserves a crown,
Congi from thence got fame;
Tremont by running gain'd renown,
And Balagny the same.

No vice it is in him that flies,
Men run the prize to gain;
'Tis deem'd a noble exercise;
Prime runners ne'er are ta'en.

On running fleet, no men look ill,
'Tis good in seasons rough;
But famous *Chamois* and *Meneville*
Did not run fast enough.

He who remains is often found
The source of his own woe;
That man who timely flees the ground,
Again may dare his foe.

'Tis better far with feet to fight,
And pierce through air and wind,
Than combat, or be slain outright,
Lagging too long behind.

Shortly after the capture of Noyon, Charles de Lorraine, duke of Guise, son of the prince assassinated at Blois, escaped from the castle of Tours, where he had been confined by order of the king; a rigorous measure, which the great name of Guise had rendered necessary. "*The escape of this prince is the ruin of the League,*" was the exclamation of Henry the Fourth, according to Le Grain, on hearing of that circumstance. The duke's liberation, according to Mathieu and Cayet, was effected by his valet de chambre, who found means to amuse Rouvrai and the guards in playing and drinking, during which period the duke effected his escape from the loftiest casement of the castle by means of a rope, of which the valet subsequently availed himself, in order to follow his master. Having immediately crossed the river in a boat, they mounted two horses purposely stationed there, and thus the prince obtained his liberty. Henry was in the first instance somewhat chagrined at this news; but on reflection conceived that the young prince would probably sow fresh seeds of division among the leaguers, because the duke of Mayenne, who had been so jealous of his brother, would no doubt entertain similar sentiments in regard to his nephew; and the result sufficiently manifested the justice of this supposition. The prog-

nostic, says Perefixe, came to pass; for Mayenne, on witnessing the rejoicings of the leaguers upon this event, the acts of grace performed by the Pope in public, and the hopes entertained by the council of *Sixteen*, saw renewed in the person of the duke of Guise, all the qualities of his father, whom they had idolized; Mayenne, I say, having witnessed such proceedings, felt his jealousy so much awakened, that although he forwarded to the duke supplies of money accompanied by prayers for his success, he nevertheless did not count upon him as any reinforcement, but a fresh subject of chagrin and difficulty.

The new pontiff, Gregory the Fourteenth, says Perefixe, was by birth a Spaniard, and it soon appeared that he possessed great influence at the court of Philip the Second. He issued monitory manifestoes against Henry; openly protected the League, in support of which he forwarded pecuniary supplies by his nuncio Landriano as well as an army of twelve thousand men, which he placed under the command of his nephew, count Hercules Sfondrate. The parliament assembled at Tours, referring to the future council, cancelled all these acts, which it pronounced to be *null and void, abusive, scandalous and seditious, made against the holy laws of the approved councils, and against the liberties of the Gallican church.* It further ordered, that they should be *burned by the hands of the common hangman*, and decreed the arrest of the body of Landriano, stiling himself Nuncio of the Pope, and promis-

ing the reward of one thousand livres to whosoever should deliver him up to justice. The rebellious part of the parliament still remaining at Paris, abrogated this edict; but all its proceedings, adds Perefixe, produced very little effect. The youthful cardinal de Bourbon, nephew of the defunct cardinal who had been elected king, made vain endeavours to cause a rising of the clergy, then sitting at Chartres, against the Parliamentary edict of Tours; and although a bull of excommunication was thundered forth *against all those ecclesiastics and others who should not adhere to the Papal decrees*, it is very remarkable that the anathemas of Rome, which proved so prejudicial to the affairs of Henry the Third, a catholic and a religious prince, produced very little effect against a monarch professing heresy. It is to be observed, however, that the former had never acquired the love of his people, whereas the latter was universally admired, and every one was in hopes of his conversion. The papal army, consisting of twelve thousand men, performed no one act, and gradually dispersed without having proved in any way serviceable to the League.

The Huguenots, perceiving that Henry lent an ear to the arguments of the catholic doctors, and that he had many private conferences with them, became very uneasy. In order, therefore, to preserve him in the protestant belief, they adopted the expedient of soliciting all the princes of the reformed religion, to send him powerful

supplies of troops, in order that he might be able to annihilate the League, not by conciliatory measures, but by force of arms. The Huguenots also obtained of Henry an edict, authorising the undisturbed exercise of their religion. This act the king forwarded to the parliament at Tours, in order that it might be registered with all the necessary forms; but that assembly boldly refused, thus showing itself as averse to the pretensions of the protestants as to the projects of the leaguers and all the factions.

The king assembled his council at Mantes to fix upon the plan of military operations necessary to be pursued in the approaching campaign. This deliberation created fresh embarrassments; for each individual, guided only by the thoughts of personal interest, and not daring to avow his motives, used all his endeavours to support plans tending to no specific good and of little utility to the common cause. The governors of provinces, with the sole hope of extending their dominions, pressed the monarch to march his army to their territories, in order to take from the League those places of which they were still in want. The governors of cities, fearing to be attacked and lose their places, complained of being abandoned; they asked for supplies, or refused those which they were enabled to furnish the king. These interested councils were always followed by the most bitter discussions and insulting reproaches between the catholics and the reformers. It was requisite that Henry should possess con-

summate address and goodness of heart to appease these quarrels, without appearing to consider the injuries mutually intended, and sufficient penetration and prudence to discern all their views, while feigning to be ignorant of them; in short, the prince was called upon to remedy every thing of himself. It was on this account that in one of his letters written at that precise time to Gabrielle d'Etrées, preserved in the library of the arsenal at Paris, he says, "*I am so weighed down by accumulated difficulties, that I must of necessity either become an idiot or a very clever man.*"

Henry entertained the highest possible opinion of marshal Biron, says Mathieu, whom he used to call his father, and who had rendered him the greatest services; the marshal combined the talents of a great statesman, with those of a consummate warrior; incapable of feeling envy, he did not indulge the envenomed hatred against the Calvinists, which was too much displayed by the Catholics in general; but he was of a violent temper, obstinate, and his self-love could ill brook contradiction; he loved the king sincerely; and annexed the greatest value to the yielding his own confidence and approbation, so that if Henry had not humoured his sentiments and vanity in the most delicate manner, he would never have been able to retain in his service a man who was so essential to his interests. One day as the council was sitting, young Chatillon offered some excellent advice, but contrary to the opinion of Biron: the latter pertinaciously maintained his own

position, and at length flew into a passion, on finding that the king, instead of supporting his argument, remained silent. The marshal now becoming infuriate, already threatened to withdraw himself altogether; when the king, addressing Chatillon in severe terms, said, "*When your beard is grey with age, you will then perhaps know something; but at present I do not approve of your speaking thus boldly. Similar conduct only becomes my father, who is here,*" continued the monarch, pointing to the marshal; "*it is necessary that all of us for a long time henceforward should attend his school.*" Having thus expressed himself, he stretched forth his arms to Biron, who instantly fell at his feet! It was in this manner Henry knew how to conquer the most imperious and difficult characters, while with consummate prudence he dissipated the storms that were incessantly forming around him, and established peace and harmony.

Henry, amidst so many obstacles and contrarieties, had, nevertheless, that ascendency with his party which the rights of legitimacy should necessarily confer; a great reputation, universal esteem, and the most brilliant renown. All those who had allied themselves to his interests had a just right to feel proud; his enemies had no real blame to attach to his cause, nor did any plea exist for the neutrality of those who had not advocated his interests. That noble cause, illustrated by so many famous deeds, filled the history of the French nation with glorious exploits; and the fame of the royalists adding to the

national character, proved a reflection upon those of the League. Mayenne, on the contrary, a timid and circumspect usurper, found himself in an unsteady and precarious situation, which became daily more strewed with thorns. He only enjoyed an odious and litigated power, always on the point of escaping him; and which he merely retained through the medium of intrigue, plots, and painful toils, unattended by glory. All his enterprises were so many attempts, his reverses signal humiliations, and his successes disasters for the country. The former intoxication was no longer apparent with his party; the leaguers began to pronounce judgment upon their own acts, and the cause was become hopeless; so that they still struggled, but without energy, and unsupported by specious illusions.

After the suppression of the council of Union, according to *Cayet* and *Pasquier*, Mayenne treated the Sixteen with the contempt they merited; and they were excluded from all places: nevertheless, this trifling band of scoundrels, capable of any thing, was still to be dreaded; so that the duke only awaited a favourable pretext in order to dismiss the members, who speedily furnished him with too just a cause for adopting that measure. Those wretches, to satisfy their hatred towards the party called *the Politics*, who were the enemies of plunder, and only continued in Paris to uphold the royal cause, required that Mayenne would create a tribunal to judge all those who should be found adherents of Henry

the Fourth, or were convicted of corresponding with the royalists. The duke positively refused his consent to the establishing an inquisition which would have licensed so many calumnies and persecutions. In the interim Mayenne proceeded to Laon; when the *Sixteen* took advantage of his absence to denounce to the parliament one Brigard, in consequence of an intercepted letter which that citizen had forwarded to his uncle, who was a royalist. The parliament examined the matter; when, finding nothing criminal in the document, Brigard was absolved. Exasperated at this decisibn, the *Sixteen* maintained, with fury, that the first president was sold to the royal party, and swore to avenge *the good cause*, of which they stated themselves the only incorruptible defenders.

After several secret assemblies, the most furious of the Sixteen had the first president, Brisson, arrested, and committed to the prison of the Little Chatelet, together with Larcher, counsellor of the parliament, and Tardif, filling a similar post at the Chatelet; when, without any legal form, they were all three hung at one window. The ensuing morning, the bodies appeared suspended from a gibbet in the Place de Greve, with defamatory writings attached to them; while some other magistrates who had also been seized, only escaped condign punishment by paying a large ransom for their lives.

The villains who had been guilty of these atrocious murders, had flattered themselves that

those crimes would cause a seditious movement in their behalf; the populace flocked to the Greve, for the purpose of viewing the miserable victims of their savage barbarity, but no expressions of joy were manifested; whereas the rebels had expected the most ferocious applauses; and in order to provoke this they had stationed emissaries, who paraded the Place de Greve, mingling with the different parties assembled, and using their endeavours to kindle popular rage by calumniating the memories of the deceased. These means had upon former occasions been crowned by success; but the people, who are only to be roused by efforts with which they are unacquainted, or no longer recollect, continued inert. Armed Spaniards, as well as Frenchmen, were seen in the square, ready to second the views of the revolters; and if this plot had succeeded, the *Sixteen* would have become masters of Paris in spite of the nobility and reputable citizens. The people, however, continuing immoveable, and in a state of consternation, the conspiracy completely failed.

Perefixe states, that some of the council of *Sixteen* formed the daring project of terminating this tragedy by causing the assassination of the duke de Mayenne should he approach the capital. Anquetil, however, says that they had recourse to the agents of Spain, and the young duke of Guise, in order to temporise with Mayenne upon his return, whose anger they greatly dreaded. They had even the design, in case those interces-

sions should not prove effectual, of securing the persons of the duchesses of Nemours and Montpensier, mother and sister of the lieutenant-general, to serve them as hostages against the vengeance of Mayenne.

The duke, who was then at Soissons, having learned these facts by means of couriers, despatched by his mother and sister, unexpectedly arrived, announced neither pardon nor vengeance; but secretly, during three days, took all the precautions dictated by prudence, and then, in the middle of the night, seized on the persons of Brisson's assassins; ordered them to be hanged, and on the following day had their bodies exposed on the very spot where they had displayed their own victims a few days before. This signal example terrified the remaining leaders of the faction of *Sixteen;* the whole of whom voluntarily expatriated themselves; and among the number was the famous Bussy, who had amassed immense sums by plunder, which he could not convey with him, and in consequence his wealth became a prey to that very populace which had idolized him. Bussy sought refuge at Brussels, where he gave vent to his rage, and ignominiously expired in that city in penury and wretchedness.

While the duke de Mayenne punished the guilty, and established peace in the capital, Henry assembled his forces: it was the month of November, but winter never proved any impediment to the king in pursuing his military

operations: for, as glory may be acquired at all periods of the year, he admitted of no difference between the seasons. During the whole of his reign he had never before found himself at the head of so powerful an army. Viscount Turenne, and the other Calvinist chiefs, had procured for him powerful assistance from Elizabeth of England, as well as from the protestant princes of Germany, which had just arrived; consisting of sixteen thousand men, four pieces of heavy ordnance, and some field artillery. This supply, united with the catholics, protestants, and six thousand Switzers in the king's pay, made his army amount to fifty thousand men. Henry formed a junction with the Germans, who were headed by the prince of Hainault, and the English commanded by the earl of Essex, at the town of Mezieres, from whence he marched to Sedan. In this latter city Henry caused the articles of marriage to be drawn out between viscount Turenne and Charlotte de la Marck, lady of Sedan and Bouillon: being a magnificent and just requital for the services which the viscount had rendered to his majesty.

It may not be unnecessary to remark that the above alliance was a political measure on the part of Henry, as well as a demonstration of his friendship towards Turenne. Catherine de la Marck was the daughter of Robert, sovereign prince of Sedan, and Frances de Bourbon Montpensier, inheritrix of that principality by the demise of her brother, William Robert de la

Marck, duke of Bouillon, which occurred at Geneva in 1588; who, by his will, commanded that his sister should not marry a catholic. This circumstance, combined with Henry's attachment for Turenne, and the desire he had of preventing an alliance between mademoiselle de Bouillon and the dukes of Lorraine, Montpensier, and Nevers, all of whom made overtures in behalf of their sons, combined with a wish to give the duke of Lorraine an ambitious rival, were, perhaps, the king's motives, as well as to deter the viscount from becoming leader of the Calvinists in France.

Henry proceeded to take some places, and among others the fortress of Haumont, a remarkably strong post, which was besieged by the duke of Nevers. The king was desirous of pointing the cannon in person; when so just proved his aim, that with a single discharge the captain who commanded the place, his lieutenant, and an ensign, were all three killed. The death of these officers so intimidated the garrison, that a capitulation was demanded; after which, Henry returned to Sedan in order to assist at the nuptials of Turenne. Upon this occasion the king spent the whole day with the newly espoused couple; and did not depart until he had seen the lady retire to bed; after which Turenne led the king to the royal chamber, and then said, "Sire, I am anxious to prove my gratitude to your majesty. I request that I may be excused for not reposing

this night under the same roof with your highness, in order to watch over the safety of your person; I beg, however, my master will not be uneasy, I have beforehand looked to every thing." The king, rather surprised, demanded what Turenne alluded to? "Sire," replied the latter, "you will know that to-morrow, I have not time at present to say more." The viscount immediately placed himself at the head of a body of troops, which he had ordered in readiness for that purpose; proceeded immediately to the city of Stenay, which he forced to surrender, and returned, bearing the welcome news to the king as he was rising from his bed the ensuing morning. The prince embraced Turenne with warmth, and then remarked; "By frequently solemnizing nuptials of this description, I should soon be master of my kingdom if the newly married were to present me with similar bridal presents."

The king, says Sully, next proceeded to lay siege to Rouen, which place was defended by general Villars, equally distinguished for his skill and bravery. Although the intrepidity of Henry was universally acknowledged, his dauntless conduct at this siege astonished Villars himself, who was heard to utter the following remark: "By heaven, the valour of this prince entitles him to a thousand diadems. I am sorry, that in consequence of a better belief, he does not inspire us with equal envy to acquire new laurels, as from

the tenets he professes we are under the necessity of disputing his own."

Rosny, on making representations to Henry respecting the danger to which he subjected himself, received the following answer: "My friend, it is impossible I should act otherwise; for, since it is for my glory and my crown that I fight, my life and every thing else should be regarded as nothing at such a price."

The earl of Essex and his brave followers seconded Henry at the siege of Rouen, with a courage and demonstrations of love for his person, which were never obliterated from his remembrance; and the earl, in particular, rendered himself conspicuous by proposing a duel with general Villars, which the latter excused himself from accepting, as in the character of governor of the place he was prohibited from risking his personal safety in such an encounter. Villars made a memorable sortie, in which, at the head of an hundred horse, he rushed through the ranks of the guards, whom he put into great disorder, and who, giving way to this daring impetuosity, would have been incapable of rallying had not the king, accompanied by baron de Biron; an Englishman (whose name Sully states he could not recollect), and Crillon, flown to their assistance. The monarch, says Sully, and those three warriors covered themselves with glory by acts of valour, presence of mind, and an intrepidity that might be looked upon as fabulous, had

not two armies been present and witnesses of their deeds. The king drove back Villars, and repossessed himself of a trench which the latter had taken, The English particularly contributed to the fortunate result of this action: and being charged to guard the trench thus recaptured, they conducted themselves with so much intrepidity as compelled the besieged to relinquish the idea of approaching it.

According to Aubigné, the siege of Rouen lasted six months, and if Henry displayed in vain so many prodigies of valour, the ill success of the enterprise was solely owing to the divisions and animosities which reigned on account of religious differences. The prince of Parma, summoned anew by the League, re-entered France and marched to succour Rouen, when the king found himself compelled to abandon the siege. Henry, however, left forces under the command of marshal Biron, and proceeded to encounter the enemy with nine thousand men, to reconnoitre his forces, and harass his march. Having understood that the duke of Guise, who commanded the van-guard of the prince of Parma, headed a body of cavalry, Henry resolved to attack it, which he executed with twelve hundred cavalry and a thousand arquebusiers on horseback. In this encounter he destroyed nearly the whole troop under Guise's order, pillaged the enemy's baggage, and took the green standard of the duke, who was so fortunate as to effect his escape, owing to the fleetness of his horse. Count

Chaligny, a prince of the house of Lorraine, and brother by the maternal side of the queen of France, widow of Henry the Third, was captured by a gentleman of Gascony named Chicot, who was called the king's buffoon, because he had singular manners, and a mode of expression completely his own; while he always used *thee* and *thou* when addressing the king:—he was, however, rich, brave, and a most determined supporter of the royal cause. After having taken Chaligny, without making known his name, he instantly conducted him to Henry, saying, as he presented the count, "*There, I give thee this prisoner, who belongs to me.*" The count de Chaligny, enraged at having yielded himself up to such an enemy, and the contempt with which he treated him, struck Chicot a blow upon the head, of which wound he died fifteen days after. As count Chaligny was sufficiently rich to pay a heavy ransom, the king, says Sully, gave it to the duchess de Longueville, to recompense her for a contribution of thirty thousand crowns which the leaguers had exacted from her in Picardy at the commencement of the war.

The king, who still had the major part of his army before Rouen, proceeded with six thousand horse towards Aumale; when Givry, whom he had despatched before, returned to acquaint him that the army of Farnese was quickly advancing towards him upon the plain. Henry, aware that his force was far from sufficient to risk a general battle, and that his followers were too numerous

for a simple skirmish, despatched the whole of his cavalry towards Neuchâtel, keeping only forty gentlemen and five hundred arquebusiers on horseback. Upon this occasion the prince conceived the idea of accomplishing a bold deed, which should deceive the enemy and raise his reputation to the highest pitch, in furnishing the means of displaying unexampled intrepidity and effecting a more difficult retreat than that performed by the prince of Parma, which had been so much extolled.

Henry ascended the hill of Aumale with his nine hundred horse, and proceeded six leagues without perceiving any thing; but, on a sudden, a thick fog dispersing, he beheld Givry return a second time, who made known to him that the enemy was so near, that, if he listened attentively, the sounds from their drums and trumpets might be heard. The king, however, desirous of beholding the enemy with his own eyes, galloped up an eminence, and took a rapid but exact glance at the disposition of the adverse army. He found that the force consisted of from seventeen to eighteen thousand infantry, twelve thousand cavalry being ranged in the centre of the battalions, and the whole flanked by carriages and baggage that rendered all approach impossible. After this survey, the king only retained an hundred cavaliers in his retinue; commanding that the three hundred horse of his squadron should halt on the declivity of the hill, to be in readiness to succour him in case of danger. He then directed Lavar-

din to conduct the five hundred horse arquebusiers, forming the residue of his troop, and to post himself by the ditches and hedges that bordered the entrance of the hamlet, from whence they might incommode such of the enemy who should advance too much: as for himself, he not only determined to await the coming up of the whole army with his hundred horse, but moreover declared that he would march forward to its encounter. While issuing these orders his officers continued silent, apprehending no less than the certain capture or death of their royal master; they gazed with astonishment at one another, not daring to speak, and yet incapable of remaining silent: at length Rosny was deputed to make representations to Henry respecting the unexampled peril into which he was precipitating himself; when the monarch replied, "*Such is the language of people who are afraid; I should never have expected it from men like you.*"—"Sire," resumed Rosny, "your majesty assuredly does not do us the injustice to imagine we harbour such a thought: issue whatsoever commands you deem necessary, and they shall be executed, provided only your majesty will retire." These words sensibly touched the king; when he remarked, that, let whatsoever might be said respecting the courage and fidelity of his officers, he should still conceive the praise inadequate: "*But,*" added the king coldly, and with an air that convinced them it would be useless to insist, "*I beg you to believe that I am not so giddy-brained as you*

imagine; but that I fear equally with every other man for the safety of my person, and that I shall retire so opportunely as to prevent any misfortune from happening to me." The party remained silent, and obeyed; upon which Henry advanced with his little troop; while the prince of Parma only regarded this rash manœuvre as an expedient to draw his cavalry into the open country, where he supposed he should find that of the king concealed, and superior to his own. Farnese, unwilling to risk the safety of his whole army, halted, remaining at his post in the centre of his forces, where, unarmed, without boots, and mounted on an uncovered waggon, he was occupied in issuing orders to repress the ardour of his soldiers, who became impatient on beholding one hundred men brave their whole army, consisting of thirty thousand. The prince of Parma, however, being assured, from the reports of his light horse and carabineers, that there were actually no more than an hundred horse on the spot, and that in case the royal cavalry was in the vicinity it could only be posted beyond the valley, commanded the attack; which was so vigorously made, and in so many directions, that the king's party was driven as far as the valley. Henry, on retreating, designedly took that route; for it was there he had stationed his arquebusiers, to whom, on arriving, the king cried out, *Charge!* in order that the enemy, apprehending an ambuscade, should stop; which they did at the moment: but the command having been followed only by

fifty or sixty discharges from the royal troops, the enemy again advanced to the charge. The arquebusiers, thinking that they had discovered a much more advantageous position than that pointed out by the king, had proceeded further on, and were consequently of no utility. The enemy then pushed forward, and became mingled with the royalists, who were reduced to fight with their swords and pistols, and, as may be imagined, were placed in a very dangerous predicament, sixty being killed; so that the whole remaining force amounted only to forty men. If at this critical juncture the opposing corps had surrounded the royalists, Henry and France were irretrievably lost! But the enemy was still ignorant of the king's being personally present; and, astonished at the incredible audacity of such a handful of men, they continued to combat in disquietude, always fearful of an unexpected surprise. The king, now perceiving that it became necessary to think of a retreat,—rendered the more difficult from having a bridge to cross at a considerable distance,—left the conflict with those of his party still remaining, overthrowing with inconceivable force and rapidity every one who opposed his passage. Having thus effected an opening, he placed himself with admirable *sang-froid* in the rear of his dwindled force, commanding it to defile by the bridge of Aumale, which was passed without confusion and in the order laid down. The king was the last who traversed the bridge, being only followed by a detachment

of his adversaries, against which he firmly kept his ground; for the opposing army, always apprehensive of some ambuscade, did not dare advance. Henry, finding his forty men in safety beyond the bridge, while in the act of passing it received a wound in the loins from the discharge of an arquebuse; and it may be regarded as a signal good fortune, that during this combat he escaped any other injury. The wound, however, did not prevent him from fighting until he arrived at the hill; where the four hundred horse he had despatched behaved themselves so gallantly, that the prince of Parma, more than ever persuaded it was the intention of his adversaries to bring him to battle, commanded his men to advance no further, but return immediately to Aumale. Le Grain asserts, that the enemy having ascertained the king was wounded, sent a trumpeter under pretext of demanding an exchange of certain prisoners; upon which Henry ordered the messenger to be conducted to his presence, and then said, "*I am well aware of the reason why you are despatched hither: acquaint the prince of Parma, your master, that you saw me hale and hearty, and well prepared to meet him whensoever he thinks fit!*" During this conflict, Henry with his own hand killed more of his adversaries than he lost of the royal troops. After this chivalric exploit he might boast, as he had desired, of having attacked, with one hundred men, an army consisting of thirty thousand; fought with it; and accomplished, when reduced to forty soldiers, a retreat in sight of the enemy,

who was compelled to retire. These prodigies, however, it must be confessed, do not justify, in the commander of an army, an enterprise marked with such evident rashness. The prince, when afterwards reflecting on the event, felt convinced of this fact; and, far from glorying in the exploit, he never gave this contest any other appellation than "*The fault of Aumale.*"—"*Heroic error,*" adds Sully, "which may nevertheless be excused, in consequence of the well-grounded opinion Henry entertained of the circumspection of the prince of Parma, to whom this too great prudence was detrimental, since it prevented him from annihilating the whole squadron, and thus terminating the war in one day by the death or capture of the king; one or the other of which events was inevitable." Henry, no doubt, was also desirous of proving, that the excessive prudence of his adversary, which had been so greatly extolled, was not unattended by its inconveniences.

Henry arrived at Neuchâtel, at which place he was confined to his bed in consequence of the wound received; when, to the sorrow experienced by his attendants on this occasion, succeeded excess of joy on the surgeon's pronouncing that the wound was neither of consequence or dangerous. The king summoned his officers around his bed, familiarly conversed with them respecting that perilous conflict; and Sully upon this subject remarks, that among all the military men then assembled in the monarch's chamber, there

were not two found to agree respecting the several events of the battle of Aumale. Sully, however, states that he has suppressed every thing which appeared of a doubtful nature; that the affair took place all at once; and then adds: "*One thing may be relied upon; which is, that the lives of very few monarchs will afford matter for a similar detail.*"

It is affirmed that Henry sent to demand of the prince of Parma what was his opinion of such an action: to which Farnese replied, it was very glorious; but that, for himself, he would never be placed in a situation that should compel him to act in a similar manner.

We learn from Anquetil, that when the French and Spaniards under the prince of Parma became acquainted with the extremity to which the king had been reduced at Aumale, they reproached Farnese with having suffered such an opportunity to escape him; upon which the prince coldly made answer, "*I would do the same again, because I conceived myself engaged with a general, and not a mere carabineer.*" This remark being repeated to the king, he felt much piqued, and said: "*It is very easy for the duke of Parma to be prudent, because he only risks the acquiring conquests which he can do without: whereas I defend my crown; and it is but natural that, harassed by such a long war, I should be prodigal of my blood, and hazard every thing to accomplish a termination of the struggle.*"

As soon as the affair of Aumale became current throughout Europe, the admiration conceived for

the valour of the king attained its acme; and Elizabeth of England wrote to compliment him, and supplicate that he would be more careful of his person. Upon this occasion Henry also received this laconic but gratifying communication from the brave Duplessis Mornay: "Sire, you have sufficiently performed the part of Alexander; it is time to imitate Augustus. To die for you constitutes our glory: to you, Sire, devolves the task of living for France; and I am bold enough to add, that it is your duty."

The king, unmindful of his wound, and saying, according to Sully, *that he postponed the cure to a more favourable occasion*, again took to horse, following the prince of Parma, and incessantly harassing his march: but the latter conducted his army with so much wisdom, that Henry could not force their ranks. The king at length relinquished the pursuit at Pondormi, returning to Neuchâtel; and then proceeded to Claye, in order that his wound might be healed. Henry shortly after gained intelligence that Villars had made a sortie from Rouen, at the head of six hundred men, in the direction of Darental; that he had cut in pieces the lansquenets, and penetrated to the royal quarters, having captured six pieces of cannon and all the powder; that then, having attacked the royalists in the rear, he had killed nearly four hundred, putting the rest to flight; and had finally re-entered the city, after clearing away and demolishing all the works of the besiegers. This disastrous news urged the king's

immediate departure for Rouen; where he ascertained that the misfortune was solely due to the inexcusable negligence of marshal Biron; against whom all the officers had risen: the protestants in consequence of his being a catholic; and those of the latter persuasion, because the impartiality of the marshal in regard to the Calvinists was so detrimental in their eyes, that they all accused him of secretly favouring the cause of heresy. Henry, far from complaining of Biron, palliated his faults, blamed no one; appearing calm, serene, and full of confidence in the future:—by this means he revived the courage of some, and appeased the anger of others. If, however, the whole were not pacified, he at least moderated their animosity, and that violent effervescence, which, but for his arrival and prudence, would have produced the most disastrous consequences. The king now felt the necessity of raising the siege of Rouen; though it might have been continued, had not those divisions existed which fomented animosities in his army. He did not, however, act with precipitancy, but proceeded to repair the works, awaiting a favourable pretext to march away his forces; which, from his wise dispositions, were completely shielded from the insults of the enemy. Thus situated, the king learned with infinite satisfaction that the prince of Parma, reinforced by the troops of the duke of Mayenne and Sfondrate, was hastily retracing his march in order to give him battle. This Henry conceived a favourable opportunity

to raise the siege; but, in order that he might gain time to abandon his lines without confusion, and regulate the order of his march, he despatched Givry to throw himself into Neuchâtel, which it was requisite the enemy should take ere he could approach Rouen. The king withdrew all his forces from before the city without experiencing the least check; and losing no time, placed himself at their head, marching direct to encounter the prince of Parma. Having entered a plain which the latter must pass, Henry halted to wait his arrival; and as soon as the prince appeared, he sent a messenger, offering battle to his adversary; who gave for answer that he accepted it, although predetermined to the contrary notwithstanding the superiority of his forces. To accomplish this, Farnese conceived a very skilful manœuvre: he made his best troops advance; who composed a regular line of battle, behind which he posted his cavalry; but during these movements, taking advantage of some adjacent hills, the whole bulk of his forces defiled along the valleys, and were soon beyond the power of Henry to attack. The infantry, presenting but a shallow surface, then marched off by the same route; so that in twenty-four hours the whole army of the prince of Parma became, as it were, eclipsed by enchantment, without there being any possibility of harassing its retreat or cutting off the rear-guard, owing to the narrow ravines through which his forces had to pass. This movement, although skilfully con-

ceived and executed, testified the fear entertained by Farnese of hazarding his great reputation by a decisive battle, though seconded by superior numbers, against the hero who had gained such brilliant victories as those of Coutras, Ivry, and Arques.

The prince of Parma proceeded to Rouen, whither it was impossible to advance and attack him: his intention was to remain there for six weeks, and recruit his army; then regain the Low Countries, having limited all the expeditions of his campaign to the placing Rouen in a state of security, together with those towns that were in possession of the League. Henry did not judge it expedient to face an army so advantageously posted, leaving the prince of Parma to enjoy his triumph, though secretly laying a snare which was attended by complete success. He disbanded his whole army, as if it had become of no utility, dispersing the troops in different places; but from the disposition of the quarters he assigned them, and the promise of his officers to attend him at Pont-de-l'Arche at the first summons, he could reunite his forces with great ease, and in a short time; calculating that the security with which his absence must inspire the prince of Parma would enable him at least to surprise that general during his retreat. Farnèse, apprehensive that Rouen, being surrounded by troops, would soon be reduced to a state of famine, and Mayenne having given assurances that there could be no danger in seeking the open country,

ordered part of his forces to Pont-Audemer, of which place he took possession. The king made no movement, and even feigned ignorance respecting the knowledge he possessed of the enemy's designs on Caudebec: consequently, far from sending any succour, as he might have done, he secretly directed the governor of that town to surrender it up in case he was attacked.

Perefixe, when adverting to this subject, states that the prince of Parma and the duke of Mayenne possessed themselves of Caudebec in twenty-four hours; at which period the former was wounded in the arm by a musquet-ball, and some days after the latter fell ill; so that both generals were at the same time confined to their litters.

Henry was well satisfied on finding that his adversary, attracted by supplies of provisions, advanced into the territory of Caux; as every precaution had been taken there for the purpose of hemming him in. The prince of Parma was, no doubt, guilty of a flagrant error in proceeding to that province; but he relied on the assurances of the duke of Mayenne, whom he supposed much better acquainted with the state of the country than himself. The inaction of Henry, however, so ill accordant with the general character of that prince, gave Farnese constant cause for alarm; and he in secret adopted measures of the greatest precaution to escape any peril, should he find himself so threatened. Aware that there was no bridge on the banks of the Seine above Rouen, the prince of Parma privately collected

in the environs of Caudebec all the boats and planks he could procure; and it was to this measure the prince was indebted for the safety of his troops, with the preservation not only of his glory and military prowess, but perhaps his life.

Henry, perceiving that Farnese came of his own accord to throw himself into his power, assembled, in eight days, upwards of twenty-eight thousand men; with which force rapidly advancing, he blocked up all the avenues between Rouen and Caudebec; after which he repaired, with ten thousand infantry and three thousand horse, to attack the van-guard of the enemy, commanded by the duke of Guise, which he had already defeated once upon a similar occasion. The astonishment experienced by this body on witnessing such an unexpected arrival rendered the defeat easy; for the duke, having his ranks broken at the first shock, precipitately fled to the main body of the forces, leaving a number of dead, and the major part of the baggage in the hands of his enemies.

The prince of Parma, confounded at this intelligence, which came upon him like a thunder-clap, proceeded with alacrity to secure his other quarters; which he effected in posting Guise at Yvetot, and collecting all his dispersed forces around the intrenched camp. As the dimensions of this encampment, however, were too small to contain the whole army, he ordered his men to approach as near as possible, to keep united, posting also three thousand men in an adjoining

wood, and fortifying the same with intrenchments, and a line communicating with the camp; all of which were completed with astonishing celerity. Scarcely was the work terminated, when the king commanded marshal Biron to attack the wood with eight thousand men,—composed of English, Dutch, and Germans, in three equal portions, in order to inspire each corps with a spirit of emulation: this attack continued for three hours, and terminated in the wood being carried; when the vanquished retreated in disorder to the fortified camp, having lost upwards of eight hundred men. The enemy's flight uncovered the major part of their positions, and, among others, that of Yvetot, where the duke of Guise was stationed with the same van-guard which had already been so roughly handled. Henry, having made his observations, attacked the place with fourteen hundred men; which was performed with such impetuosity, that the enemy was soon put into disorder: upon which, Farnese, aware that his whole van-guard must be cut in pieces, flew thither in person, and bravely sustained the vigorous attacks of the royalists, until the forces in that quarter had gained the intrenched camp. This affair, which cost the prince of Parma upwards of seven hundred men, proved that he knew as well how to fight as to command; but he received a dangerous wound, which terminated fatally some months afterwards. During this encounter night came on; when the king, instead of thinking of rest,

employed himself in making every arrangement possible to ensure success. Judging that the adverse army, already terrified and half beaten, was so closely hemmed in the camp that its numbers were more prejudicial than serviceable, he no longer hesitated in the determination of endeavouring to force it. For this purpose he had, during the night, ordered up six pieces of cannon, which he pointed on the intrenchment of the camp; after which he visited his army, traced out the various dispositions, and gave all his orders, which were punctually executed. Henry then awaited with impatience the break of day, firmly believing that his victims could not escape: but what was his astonishment and chagrin, when the first tinge of Aurora discovered the whole army of his opponent posted on the opposite bank of the river! "*Is it a fable?*" cries Sully; "*is it an illusion?*" Scarcely could the monarch and his whole army believe their eyes. This astonishing feat proves how very ill the king was served by his spies; for, notwithstanding the security of his own position, a general has uniformly such emissaries in his employ.

Farnese had foreseen Henry's determination to attack him in his camp the following morning; and he felt convinced that, if he did not effect a retreat, he was inevitably lost. In this extremity he collected together all the fruits of his rare prudence, ordering the barks stationed at some distance to descend the river; when, notwithstanding the pain caused by his wound, and

the confusion that reigned throughout the camp, he so adroitly issued his orders that a bridge was formed by the vessels and timber, over which he passed the whole army with its baggage, and then set fire to the fabric, which was in part consumed, or drifted away by the current of the stream. Such proved the termination of this interesting struggle of activity, military talents, and courage, between two princes justly esteemed the greatest military commanders in Europe.

The prince of Parma, according to Perefixe, after passing the river, directed his march to the plains of Neufbourg, proceeding with such alacrity, that he arrived in four days at the bridge of Charenton, having scarcely enjoyed any rest during the whole time, as he subsequently confessed on his arrival at Brie. It is stated that prior to his commencing his march, Farnese despatched a trumpeter to Henry, in order to inquire what he thought of such a retreat; when the king candidly confessed that it excited his admiration to such a point, that he conceived it superior to the gaining two battles: as the *chef-d'œuvre* of a great captain did not so much depend on fighting and conquering, as the accomplishment of what he had undertaken without risking a battle.

The king, however, whom nothing could discourage, proposed to his council to traverse the Seine at Pont de l'Arche, and immediately follow the enemy, weakened by his losses, in consternation at what had happened, and who had until that period uniformly displayed a disinclination

to fight. This proposal, which Sully conceived the only one proper to adopt, excited disapprobation in the council, where a universal cry was heard, and a kind of general rising, as if Henry had made one of the most extravagant propositions. The king had never been perfectly obeyed except in the day of battle, when he was uniformly seconded, but his plans were always more or less opposed, and the greater the number of captains assembled under his banners, so in proportion were these oppositions increased. "Upon which, adds Sully, two reflections naturally occur to the mind: first, it might have happened that a prince, who in all his expeditions could only have recourse to troops collected in various directions, of different countries, religions, manners, and interests, frequently in very small numbers, and always ready to mutiny, would not have been able to accomplish all we find recorded in Henry's history: secondly, to what a pitch might not the same prince have arrived, if in lieu of such troops he had commanded a large body of docile, united, and well disciplined soldiers, and constantly attached to his person, such, in short, as were led on by those conquerors so highly extolled in history. If a similar reflection is not made whensoever an opportunity presents itself, it is on account of the necessity of so doing at every page."

Henry had only to boast of a small number of catholics and Calvinists, and the English forces, whose zeal for his service was never found defi-

cient; in every other direction he experienced so much ill will, a desire to repose, and a spirit of revolt so pronounced in his council and his army, that he was compelled to abandon the design; however, wishing to spare himself the humiliation of yielding, he found it requisite to consent with a good grace. Concealing in his soul the acute sorrow he experienced, the king manifested no signs of spite or anger; he spoke with liberality to the foreigners who were desirous of returning to their homes, and freely gave his consent, thanking them in affectionate terms, giving all the money he possessed, though in want himself for the most pressing emergencies, praising the services and valour of all; permitting the catholic and protestant officers to retire with their troops, only reserving to himself a corps of ten thousand foot and three thousand horse, which he deemed sufficient to resist the duke of Mayenne, very much weakened by the retreat of the prince of Parma. Although the army of the League had abandoned Normandy, some troops continued there, and the war was still carried on, though very feebly. Henry, after retaking Caudebec, proceeded to Picardy; when Mayenne, desirous of profiting by his absence to make some incursions in Normandy, gave Villars a corps of five thousand men, ordering him to lay siege to Quillebeuf. Bellegarde, grand equerry of France, being stationed at that town when it was invested, said that he would teach Villars he did not know how to take places so well as to

defend them. In fact, Bellegarde, with an hundred soldiers, thirty-five gentlemen, who had volunteered with a small portion of the inhabitants, and a single piece of cannon, undertook the defence of the place, brave Crillon arriving there upon the seventh day. This insufficient force repelled the assaults, and during seventeen days kept in check an army of five thousand men, headed by a general of acknowledged reputation. Such determined resistance afforded time for the arrival of Fervaques and the counts de Saint Pol and d'O, accompanied by twelve hundred horse and a corps of infantry, upon which Villars raised the siege. Bellegarde immediately set forward to join the king in Champaigne, in order that he might assist at the siege of Epernay, which was invested by marshal Biron, that place being commanded for the League by De Rosne. This captain had ordered four hundred men to scour the surrounding country, of which Henry, on his arrival, being apprised, resolved to cut them off; coming in contact with them in a deep and very narrow lane, as they were returning to re-enter the town. Henry, having preceded his forces, and accompanied only by fourteen followers, finding himself thus engaged, resolved to stand firm, and by thus making head against four hundred opponents, gave time for the arrival of his troops, when the enemies were cut in pieces and the city taken; this affair, however, cost the life of marshal Biron, who was killed by a cannon-ball carrying away his head. That veteran warrior

had been commander in chief at seven regular battles, and bore the scars of the same number of wounds received on those occasions. He stood as godfather at the baptism of the famous cardinal Richelieu, from whom that celebrated statesman acquired his Christian name. The death of this veteran soldier caused the king great anguish, who honoured his memory by sincere regrets and eulogiums on his eminent qualifications.

The taking of Epernay was the final military expedition of this year; as the king, being destitute of pecuniary resources, was under the necessity of disbanding the army.

At this period Mayenne, urged by the advice of Villeroy and Jeanin, appeared disposed to come to terms; being dispirited on account of the ill success of his arms, and the domineering tone of the Spaniards; for, according to Perefixe, Philip the Second stipulated that Isabella Clara Eugenia should espouse that prince, who, to the prejudice of Henry, should be elected king of France. Mayenne, being married, did not relish the proposal, and it appeared that the king of Spain had his views on the young duke of Guise, and was disposed to unite him with the infanta. These hopes and projects soon becoming openly manifest, created between the dukes of Mayenne and Guise, his nephew, a division and animosity which became very useful to the interests of the king.

Some negotiations, in consequence, were set

on foot between Henry and Mayenne; but Villeroy and Jeanin, says Perefixe, exacted for the latter such advantageous terms, *that they made the heart sick*; and the conferences were speedily broken. Shortly after, Philip of Spain, being dissatisfied with Mayenne, and calculating but little on the means of the duke of Guise, made proposals to Henry to aid him in re-conquering his crown, if he would surrender up to him the duchies of Burgundy and Brittany. The king rejected this offer with disdain, and in order to augment the misunderstanding that existed between his enemies, made the same known to Mayenne.

On the 5th of December, 1592, the prince of Parma, having prepared for a new expedition against France, was obliged, on account of his declining health, to stop at Arras, in which city he expired at the age of forty-six.

The Spaniards were accused of having poisoned the prince of Parma from motives of jealousy; but the wound he had received in Normandy the preceding year, combined with the deformed make of his body, were, according to Cayet, the sole causes of his death, as appeared on the opening of the corpse. His remains were conveyed to Italy through Lorraine, accompanied by an hundred and sixty horses caparisoned in black. If, however, we may credit d'Aubigné, Farnese complained of having been twice poisoned by the Spaniards; that writer adding, the Italians were so fully convinced of the fact, that they

could not afterwards associate with those of the Spanish nation.

This prince was, without doubt, an experienced general, but he never gave battle; and all the achievements known respecting him constitute but a trifling portion of those which a great captain ought to possess. It may even be said that his prudence abandoned him on the most important occasion, when he entered the territory of Caux; and that the sage expedient of assembling boats would have been useless, if the spies of Henry had been vigilant; notwithstanding this, Farnese has left behind him the reputation of being the greatest general of his day; that is to say, he was panegyrized to excess by the Spaniards, and their party, and equally calumniated by others, so that some exaggeration accompanies those praises.

The death of the prince of Parma was such a loss to the king of Spain and the League, that the war was in consequence suspended; giving Henry a short lapse of repose, so absolutely necessary, in order to afford him time for the arrangement of his affairs.

The first occurrence of the year 1593, says Perefixe, was the assembling of the states general; which, Mayenne, against his interests, was obliged to convoke, being urged thereto by the king of Spain. As the cardinal de Bourbon was dead, and Henry declared to have forfeited the crown, the question was to elect a king. To popes Gregory the Fourteenth and Innocent the

Ninth, had succeeded Clement the Eighth, who had just issued a bull, commanding all catholic Frenchmen to choose as speedily as possible a monarch attached to their religion.

Henry, far from feeling alarmed at this assembly, which was apparently so opposed to his interests, felt that it would prove favourable to him; and that the necessity there was for peace, the variety of opinions, the secret jealousies, and the exaggerated pretensions, must necessarily create confusion in these pretended states, hastily assembled, deliberating without any fixed plan, and not being able to agree, either from their opinions, or as regarded the public interest.

At the commencement of the sittings, which took place at Paris, the Spanish monarch openly proposed, *the nomination of a French catholic prince, who should espouse the infanta Isabella, and reign conjointly with her over the French people.* The states did not reject the proposition, but the parliament was indignant: that exalted body, says Perefixe, *though captive and mutilated,* calling to mind its ancient vigour, ordered remonstrances to be made to the duke de Mayenne, charging him to maintain the fundamental laws of the state, and that he should prevent the crown, committed to his lieutenancy, from being transferred to strangers; moreover declaring null and void all the treaties made, and to be entered into, which should be in opposition to the laws of the state.

It seems apparent, that the parliament in this

instance acted in conjunction with Mayenne; be this, however, as it may, the document was productive of beneficial effects, animating all good Frenchmen with zeal and patriotism, while the taking of Dreux by the king finally disposed the minds of all good Frenchmen in favour of their legitimate monarch.

On Thursday the 28th of January, arrived at the gate Saint Honoré of Paris, one of the king's trumpeters, according to the *Journal de l'Etoile*, who demanded permission to enter for the purpose of conferring with the duke de Mayenne. On being interrogated, the messenger stated, that he was the bearer of good propositions on the part of the princes and catholic lords; and made known in few words the contents of his despatches, which soon spread throughout the city, by an immense population running to behold him, who listened with as much interest as curiosity. The trumpeter, escorted by the multitude, who pressed round him on all sides, was conducted to the residence of the duke de Mayenne, to whom he delivered a packet, which the prince did not break open until his council had assembled when the following was found to be the nature of its contents:

"The princes, prelates, and officers, of the crown, together with the principal catholic peers, in company with his majesty, touched by the calamities of war, and well aware of the good and holy intention of the king, and after receiving from the monarch the promise to make himself fully instructed on the subject of religion, hereby offer

to enter into a conference and communication, by means of deputies, to be chosen in such place as shall be deemed most expedient between Paris and Saint Denis; promising to themselves, by the assistance of God, the uniform author of peace and preserver of the French monarchy, to find by means of such conference a remedy for the evils of the kingdom, and the repose of all well-wishers to the state. Given at Chartres this 27th of January 1593. (Signed) REVAL."

This document was immediately carried by Mayenne to the assembly of the states general, in order that they might deliberate on its contents; when, notwithstanding all the intrigues and opposition of the partisans of Spain, the proposal was accepted, on condition that the conferences should only be held between catholics. The Spaniards then openly avowed that Philip the Second nominated the duke of Guise to be king of France, to whom he gave the infanta, and all the succours necessary to ensure him the throne in case he obtained the suffrages of the nation.

Never, says Perefixe, was any man more astonished than Mayenné, when he found himself on the eve of being compelled to obey his nephew, and that his authority must be annihilated. The duchess, still more intemperate than the prince, could not conceal her spite and jealousy; so that, rather than behold the crown placed upon the head of young Guise, she advised her husband to make peace with the king upon any

terms. Mayenne, already inclined to such a measure, resolved that, rather than behold his nephew placed over him, there was no step he would not hazard to frustrate the measure.

However, dissembling his feelings, he retarded the conferences, in order to gain time for reflection: to accomplish which, he announced his intention of joining count de Mansfeld, who was marching feeble succours from Spain; and he made the deputies of the states promise to await his return before they proceeded to nominate a king. Mayenne and Mansfeld having met, did nothing of importance, and separated on bad terms, when the latter returned to the Low Countries, and the former concluded a truce with the king. The conferences held between the catholic noblemen on the king's part, and those of the League, took place at Surene; but were merely productive of disputes. A satirical production, however, which then appeared, entitled *Menippée*, effected more than any thing else to forward the views of Henry. The intent of this volume, replete with wit and raillery, was to turn into ridicule the leaguers and the states assembled by Mayenne, a most ingenious performance, and the first model in French of the poignant satire and acute irony which were subsequently produced in the *Lettres Provinciales*, justly regarded as a *chef-d'œuvre* of that language.

According to the author of a recent work entitled *L'Amour de Henri Quatre pour les Lettres;* several writers assisted in composing the *Satire*

Menippée, or *Catholicon d'Espagne*; and among the number were, Pithou, Florent Chretien, Passerat, Rapin, &c. It was called by the French, *Menippée*, from the name of *Menippus*, the Cynic philosopher, rendered so famous for the acuteness and energy of his satires. Varro also published at Rome a collection of the same nature, to which he annexed the title of *Satiræ Menippæ*.

The work in question produced such a happy influence on the affairs then agitated, from the poignant ridicule with which it attacked the League, that the factious from thence received a more deadly blow than was accomplished by all the conquests of Henry the Great.

The king proceeded to Mantes for the purpose of being enlightened; where he found, according to several historians, many bishops and theologians, not only of his own party, but of the leaguers, invited to contribute their knowledge for the instruction of Henry, notwithstanding the opposition and menaces of the intriguing and the factious. The abbé Sainte Genevieve, more persecuted than the rest, because he was long known to have entertained sentiments favourable to the monarch, was cast into prison; from whence he got liberated with great difficulty, when he secretly fled to join the king at Mantes. Henry had several conferences held in his presence, between the ecclesiastics of either church; when one minister stating his opinion that it was possible to be saved in the catholic religion, the king taking up the conversation, said, "*Pru-*

dence then requires that I should adopt that religion instead of yours; since, in professing Calvinism, I am saved, as you state; but not so according to them. Consequently, reason should urge me to follow that which is the most certain." Upon another occasion, Henry, in reply to the remark made by a Calvinist minister, named La Faye, said, "*Were I to adopt your advice, there would soon be neither a king nor a kingdom in France. I am desirous that all my subjects alike should enjoy peace, and that my soul may equally taste repose. Consider among yourselves what will be most beneficial to your interests, and you will ever find me ready to content you.*"—*Chron. Novennaire.*

Thus, after repeated conferences, the whole of which are preserved in the royal library of manuscripts at Paris, vol. 9214, the king abandoned the Calvinist persuasion for the Romish faith; when his abjuration was received by the prelates, doctors, and theologians assembled, who only exacted of the monarch that he should expedite a solemn embassy to the pope, demanding absolution, which Henry engaged to perform. With regard to the sincerity of his conversion, Sully, who never could be prevailed upon to relinquish Calvinism, though frequently urged thereto by his master, speaking on this subject, states as follows, in his Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 170:—"As uprightness and sincerity were the principles of his soul, as they proved in regard to his promises, I am fully convinced that nothing could have prompted him to embrace a religion which

he internally despised, or had even doubted. A prince who never deceived men, was far from desirous of imposing upon God." It is stated, that Sully, although a rigid Calvinist, advised the king to embrace the catholic faith; wherefore, as the protestant ministers had allowed that salvation was to be attained in that religion, Henry in consequence suffered political motives to influence his conduct; and upon one occasion pleasantly remarked, "*Ventre Saint Gris, Paris is well worth a mass.*"

Henry commanded the necessary preparations for the ceremony of his abjuration, ordering letters to be forwarded to many curates of Paris, inviting them to attend; at the same time he caused writings to be distributed throughout Paris and the vicinity, promising safety to all those who should repair to Saint Denis on the 25th of July 1593, to witness his abjuration. The curate of Saint Eustacius, with several others, demanded permission of Mayenne to repair to Saint Denis; when the duke referred them to the legate, who prohibited their attendance under the threat of excommunication. Upon this, the curate of Saint Eustacius, addressing that dignitary in the name of his brethren, said, "Sir, your character, your dignity, and the evangelic doctrine you profess, ought to lead you to proceed at our head; and since you will not permit us to receive from you that edifying example, we will give it you ourselves."

The curate then retired, and with his col-

leagues instantly set forward for Saint-Denis; and although the legate issued an interdict against all catholics repairing thither, his mandate was wholly unattended to.

On the 25th of July, Mayenne ordered the gates of Paris to be closed, to prevent the inhabitants from issuing forth; but the concourse of every order of society was so great at the portals, that the apprehension of a seditious movement caused them to be opened. In the interim, Henry had repaired to Saint-Denis, where he found the archbishop of Bourges, cardinal Bourbon, and many other bishops and dignified ecclesiastics. On the 24th, they were all summoned to the king's apartment, where from six in the morning until one in the evening the monarch conferred with them, during which he made known all the instructions he had received. The whole assembly was perfectly satisfied with the replies and sentiments of the king, and retired charmed with his frankness and affability. On the day appointed for the ceremony, such was the eagerness of the Parisians to witness the sight, that the city appeared desolate, which was also the case with all the towns, villages, and surrounding hamlets.

By eight in the morning, Henry, habited in white satin, and wearing a black mantle, appeared in the street; followed by the princes and officers of the crown, and an immense retinue of gentlemen, preceded by the Swiss guard, drums beating, together with the French and Scotch of his

body-guard, accompanied by twelve trumpeters. In this manner the king marched to the abbey church of Saint-Denis; the streets through which he passed being hung with tapestry, covered with flowers, and completely filled by the countless throngs anxious to behold and rush before him. The regards of the multitude seemed never satisfied with gazing on the features of the hero, so famous by his exploits, and whose physiognomy, calm and majestic, announced nothing but sweetness and generosity. The populace, quite intoxicated with joy on beholding him, made the air re-echo with ceaseless acclamations of *Long live the king!* while the females, shedding tears of joy, exclaimed with transports, "*The Lord bless him, and grant that he may soon enter the church of Our Lady!*" Many women present, raising their infants in their arms, presented them to Henry's view, as if inspired by a presentiment that he was speedily to become their sovereign, and the parent of all his subjects.

The king marched slowly forward, and at length arrived at the portal of the church, where he was received by the archbishop of Bourges, cardinal Bourbon, with nine other bishops, and all the clergy and monks of the monastery, who were in attendance with the crucifix, the evangelists and the holy water. Henry approached, when the archbishop demanded: Who are you? I am the king, replied Henry. What is your demand? I require, said the monarch, to be received within the pale of the holy catholic, apostolic, and

Roman church. Do you ask it sincerely? Yes, said the king; I wish and I desire it. After which, falling on his knees and joining his hands, he in a loud voice delivered his profession of faith as follows:—"I protest and swear in the face of the Almighty, to live and die in the catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion; to maintain and defend it against every danger, if necessary, with my blood and my life; hereby renouncing all other heresies contrary thereto."

Sully in his Memoirs, speaking of this profession of faith, says: "I did not expect to be summoned on such an occasion, and retired from the scene of action as a man having no interest whatsoever in the spectacle that was transacting; when, on a sudden, I saw Perron arrive, who was despatched to me by the cardinal de Bourbon, in order to appease a final dispute which had arisen concerning the terms that should be used in the formula of the king's profession of faith. The priests and the catholics filled it with so many minutiæ, that, instead of a solemn declaration, it would have been a ridiculous composition. The protestant ministers, and Henry himself, did not relish such a document; and in particular, when speaking of the *requiem*, the monarch exclaimed, "*Let us hear nothing of the requiem; I am not yet defunct.*"

The monarch then placed in the hands of the archbishop a paper containing this profession, signed with his own hand. On raising him up, the prelate presented his ring for him to kiss,

pronounced his absolution, then gave his blessing, and embraced him. During this ceremony, the profoundest silence reigned throughout the church, though it was crowded to excess; every catholic joyfully listening to the words that reconciled the monarch, according to his idea, with heaven and the people. Henry then, before the grand altar, repeated upon the Evangelists his profession of faith and his oath; when being raised by the cardinal and the archbishop, the latter conducted him to a confessional erected under a pavilion behind the grand altar; upon which a *Te Deum*, sung by the whole choir, and accompanied by church music, proclaimed the return of a strayed sheep to the flock. The king's confession being ended, he placed himself before a praying-desk, covered with blue velvet, ornamented by golden *fleurs-de-lis;* when he heard mass performed. On reading the Evangelists, cardinal Bourbon presented the book for Henry to kiss; and the king then proceeded to make his offering. At the termination of mass, the monarch was reconducted by the clergy to the portal of the church; and from thence by the populace, and all who had repaired from Paris to Saint-Denis, as far as his lodging, amidst the most enthusiastic acclamations, the ringing of bells, clangor of trumpets, and incessant discharges of cannon and artillery: so that from that period, says Perefixe, Henry was hailed as king by the people, and no longer known by the simple ap-

pellation of *Le Béarnais*, which the leaguers used as a term of reproach.

The king then caused pieces of money to be thrown among the populace, the same having been struck for the occasion. On proceeding to the church, the religious ceremony which Henry was called upon to celebrate did not permit him to testify the accustomed affability of his conduct; but, on his return, a sprightly gaiety was observed to animate his features, and convey to them the most amiable expression. The same evening, Henry returned to the church, where he heard a sermon delivered by the bishop of Bourges, and the vesper-chaunt. At the conclusion of the service, he mounted his horse and proceeded to Montmartre, for the purpose of visiting the tombs of the holy martyrs, apostles of France. As night drew in, the inhabitants of Saint-Denis and those of the surrounding villages, yielding to a similar impulse of joy, illumined their houses, made bonfires in the streets, and by every species of rejoicing celebrated with transports the memorable day, which awakened in every bosom the hopes of approaching peace and prosperity.

CHAPTER XIII.

The pope refuses to grant absolution.—Attempt of Peter Barrière to assassinate the king.—Fecamp taken by the leaguers, but restored to Henry by Bois Rosé.—Vitry joins the king, and the inhabitants of Meaux surrender up that city.—Lyons returns to its obedience.—Count Belin, dispossessed of the governorship of Paris, joins the king.—Orleans and Bourges surrendered to Henry.—Henry crowned at Chartres.—Rosny despatched to treat with Villars for the surrender of Rouen.—Treaty executed.—Mayenne refuses offers of peace and quits Paris, leaving Brissac as governor.—Plans adopted by Brissac for the surrender of Paris to the king.—Henry enters his capital.—He grants an honourable capitulation to the Spanish garrison.—His excess of clemency — rigid justice, and generosity.—Wise measures adopted by the king to establish universal tranquillity. — Rosny despatched to Rouen, which city is surrendered by Villars to the king.—Mayenne and count de Mansfeld take La Capelle.—Henry leaves Paris.—Lays siege to Laon.—Factious movements of the count d'Auvergne in Paris.—Henry's presence of mind at Saint Lambert.—Capitulation of Laon.—Mayenne directs his views upon Burgundy.—Henry returns to Paris.—Sully's character of the dowager duchess of Guise.—She makes proposals for an accommodation between the Duke and Henry. — Reconciliation of Guise with the king.

IMMEDIATELY after Henry's abjuration he despatched couriers into all the provinces, to the parliaments, and the governors of places, to pub-

lish the act; and the announcement of the truce having speedily after followed, the people testified their satisfaction in great rejoicings, which took place throughout the kingdom.

The king, however, did not so speedily reap the fruits he desired, and which had been in the first instance expected; for the more the duke de Mayenne, the leaguers, and the emissaries of Philip the Second of Spain, saw a falling off in their affairs, so in proportion did they redouble their efforts in order to maintain the faction. For this purpose they had recourse to two expedients, which plainly manifested that religion was merely a veil resorted to for the purpose of concealing their ambition. The dukes of Mayenne, Guise, Aumale, and Elbeuf, the lords of Châtre, Rosne, and Saint Paul, marshals of the League, and Tornabon, agent of the duke de Mercœur, swore between the hands of the legate to maintain the League, and never conclude a peace with Henry of Navarre, be the catholic acts he should ratify whatsoever they might. This oath was kept very secret; but the fact was ascertained in consequence of despatches written by the legate being seized on their way to Rome, wherein this circumstance was communicated.

The second measure adopted was the receiving the councils of Trent by the states-general, in order to render the pope favourable. However, notwithstanding these impediments, Henry's return to catholicism produced a wonderful effect in Paris, where sentiments of affection were pub-

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licly manifested for the king, who was the topic of general conversation. Every thing that he had said or done at Saint-Dènis was recapitulated; the most insignificant details were listened to with the liveliest interest; his talents and military exploits were celebrated; the women praised his grace, generosity, and clemency; and the populace descanted on his goodness of heart; so that it might be said Henry already reigned in his capital. At this juncture the monarch, by an act of peculiar generosity, tended still more to augment the general enthusiasm:—the truce of a month had expired, and Mayenne was by no means in a state to continue the war; as, independent of the public voice which opposed the measure, the duke was alike in want of men and money. Under this state of affairs, the king's generals importuned him to recommence hostilities with vigour, and crush his enemies at once; but Henry preferred to conquer them by his generosity; and, in consequence, five days after his abjuration he offered to renew the truce for three months. This proposal, which excited infinite astonishment, was joyfully accepted by the League; and although Mayenne, in consequence, had time to fortify himself, yet by this act the monarch increased the sentiment of admiration cherished towards him, as he thereby proved how greatly he was averse to the continuance of a civil war.

Henry in the interim did not fail to negotiate with the see of Rome, for the purpose of obtain-

ing absolution; but the pontiff was inexorable to his proposals, stating that it was requisite an angel should descend from Heaven in order to convince his holiness of the sincerity of the king's abjuration. The leaguers, aware of the popularity of Henry, had recourse to pasquinades and the most virulent writings, in order to stigmatize the monarch's character; among which, in particular, was a publication entitled *Banquet du Comte d'Arète*, the *Catholique Anglois*, and the *Anti-Franco-Gallia*. The author of these philippics was Lewis d'Orleans, an advocate, and one of the first associates of the League, for which faction his zeal was outrageous. This writer was at Paris on the king's subsequent entry into that city; and the prince being importuned to seize his person, contented himself with making this remark: "*He is certainly a bad man, but I do not wish that any harm should befall him.*" This vile calumniator was, however, driven from the capital by taunts and public execration, and retired from France, when he ended his days in misery.

Mayenne despatched an embassy to Rome, which was charged to neglect nothing in order to make the pope continue inflexible in his refusal to grant absolution to the king; yet, in spite of all the efforts used by a usurped and expiring faction, the party of Henry acquired additional strength every day.

Henry, victorious and universally admired, might have flattered himself with the idea of soon enjoying the fruits of so many labours; but

scarcely were these hopes formed, when they were on the eve of being annihilated by the attempt of Peter Barrière, a native of Orleans, who had been a boatman by trade, and subsequently a soldier. He had communicated his horrible project to several priests of Paris and Lyons, all of whom had advised him to put his plan into effect. The last ecclesiastic he applied to at Lyons was a Dominican of Florence, named Seraphin Bianchi, a very wise and prudent churchman, who postponed giving his answer until the following day. In the interval this monk requested one Brancaleon, a gentleman attached to the suit of the queen dowager of France, to come to his residence at a certain hour, directing him to observe well the countenance of the man whom he would find there, in order that he might recognize him on a future occasion. Brancaleon followed the instructions laid down; and when Barrière had retired, Bianchi explained to Brancaleon the whole transaction, conjuring him to proceed to the king, in order to cause the arrest of the murderer. The great danger which then existed when journeying on the roads, prevented the latter gentleman's arrival at court so speedily as he intended; but he had previously forwarded a drawing of the villain's countenance, so that the bearer of this portrait, more expeditious than Brancaleon, had already got to Melun: the latter, notwithstanding, gained that city in sufficient time to cause the seizure of Barrière. The assassin, when subjected to the tor-

ture, confessed his having communicated the diabolical intention to numerous dignitaries of the church, all of whom had confirmed him in his resolution; and, in particular, father Varade, a jesuit of Paris, who, in order to remove all the scruples of the villain in respect to his murdering the king so recently converted, directed him to apply to one of his fraternity, who confessed, and then administered the host. After the monarch's return to Paris the pope's legate conducted father Varade with him to Rome, having obtained the king's permission; who refrained from punishing him, equally with many others, saying, "*I wish to forget and pardon every thing: ought I to be more displeased with what they have done, than at a madman when he strikes, or walks forth naked to public view?*"

Attempts of this sanguinary nature augmented the abhorrence entertained by all good Frenchmen against the League, which was destroying itself. Disunion was hourly manifested between the chiefs, who strove to render themselves independent of one another: each was ambitious of assuming supreme sovereignty in the province of which he was appointed governor, and privily strove to enter into some negotiations with the king.

The duke of Mayenne had great cause of complaint against the duke of Nemours, his brother on the maternal side, who had refused to attend the states in person, or even nominate deputies; in addition to which, the latter, who was governor

of Lyons, acted as a complete despot; taking possession of the revenues of the province, loading the people with imposts, and paying no attention to the truce entered into with the king, which he violated by daily acts of open hostility, that subjected the Lyonese to all the miseries of warfare. In consequence of this, Mayenne secretly instigated the natives of Lyons to rise and oppose his brother's tyranny: the revolt, in consequence, took place; upon which the person of Nemours was seized and committed to the castle of Pierre-Encise; when the populace, aware of the power they possessed, some months after made a more happy use of their authority.

At this period Rosny, the friend of Villars, negotiated an accommodation between that general and the king; but the unexpected capture of Fecamp from the royalists decided the former to break off, for the present, all idea of an amicable adjustment. The capture of this town was effected by one Bois Rosé, a very determined leaguer, and a warrior of the most intrepid courage, who became master of Fecamp by scaling a rock six hundred feet high and deemed inaccessible, having only a few soldiers in his retinue. This gallant captain, having attained his object, communicated the incredible success to Villars, demanding the government of the citadel as a recompense for his bravery; which was, however, refused. Bois Rosé, in the first transport of his fury at this injustice, delivered up the place to the king, with whose conversion he had just been

made acquainted. Villars, exasperated, sent forces to invest Fecamp; when Bois Rosé summoned Henry to his assistance, who marched to Dieppe, and thence to Saint Valery in the territory of Caux.

Count Belin arrived at Saint Valery on the part of the duke of Mayenne, to solicit a continuation of the truce, stating that the prince was desirous of coming to terms, but that it was necessary he should previously make known his intentions to the courts of Rome and Madrid, and regulate his affairs. The king, perceiving that the duke only sought to amuse him, rejected every proposal; and, after having dismissed Belin, marched direct to Fecamp, compelled the troops of Villars to retire, and abundantly supplied the fortress with every thing necessary for its defence. Henry then returned to Mantes, where he learned that the marquis de Vitry, governor of Meaux in behalf of the League, was disposed to come over to the royal party.

Vitry had been one of the first catholic noblemen who, after the assassination of Henry the Third, refused to acknowledge a protestant monarch; but when he found the king had abjured, he represented to the duke de Mayenne, that as there no longer existed any impediment to prevent the French from recognizing their legitimate sovereign, he was resolved to adopt that line of conduct. The duke, however, gave Vitry assurances that he was then negotiating with Henry in person, requested he would not pursue hasty

measures; and the marquis consented: but when he found the truce was terminated, and war on the point of breaking out anew, he delayed his intention no longer. Vitry made no selfish stipulations with Henry; he did not barter his repentance, and return to the legitimate cause in a similar manner to many others; exacting nothing from the king, and manifesting a disinterestedness which was the guarantee for his future fidelity. On the 24th of December he caused all the garrison to march out of Meaux; and having assembled the principal magistrates and citizens, thus addressed them:—"Gentlemen, the king having embraced the catholic faith, has removed every obstacle that prevented his subjects from acknowledging their monarch: I am now going to act according to the dictates of duty, and I have given timely notice of my conduct to the duke de Mayenne. I might abandon the city to the king, but have not done so. It is into your own custody I remit the place, leaving it to yourselves to decide as you may think advisable; and if it proves conformable with your duty, you will have had all the merit of a free and voluntary decision."

On concluding this address, Vitry delivered the keys into the hands of the magistrates, and retired from Meaux in order to join his troops, which awaited his arrival at a quarter of a league from the town. This declaration astonished the inhabitants, and decided them in the line of conduct they ought to pursue; for, after some mi-

nutes' deliberation, they adopted a unanimous resolution to follow the example of their governor. On breaking up the assembly, a general cry was heard of "*Long live the king!*" to which the people replied by reiterating the same exclamation, and adopting the white scarf; after which a deputation was despatched to Vitry, inviting him back to the city, when he repaired thither on the instant. These joyful tidings were immediately conveyed to Henry, who repaired to Meaux at the commencement of January, and was welcomed with every demonstration of enthusiastic joy. The king was the more gratified at this event, as Meaux proved the first city which, since his abjuration, had voluntarily returned to his obedience. The monarch, in consequence, promised that no other form of worship but catholicism should be tolerated within its walls; he confirmed all the church preferments and public offices to those whom Mayenne had previously nominated; he exempted the people from all contributions for nine years; and, in order to give proof of his implicit confidence, left no other garrison in the place but the men-at-arms of the marquis of Vitry, whom he confirmed in the post of governor; with which, at his death, he invested the son of that nobleman.

The duke de Mayenne despatched a gentleman to Vitry, in order to reproach him for his treasonable conduct in having surrendered up Meaux to the king; to whom the marquis replied, that he had been guilty of no treasonable act, having

previously given the duke notice; and that it was not himself, but the inhabitants, who had recalled the king. The messenger, however, continuing to insist that the populace would have remained true to their party had not the governor quitted the place which had been confided to his custody, Vitry made answer: "You are too importunate; you compel me at length to speak in the plain language of a soldier. Suppose a thief had in my presence pilfered a purse, and, confiding it to me, I had remitted it to the legitimate owner; in refusing to surrender it up to the robber from whom I had received it—would such, according to your opinion, be a bad and treasonable proceeding? Yet thus stands the case, as regards the city of Meaux." This mode of reasoning, which it was difficult to refute, at once terminated the conference.

The surrender of Meaux was speedily followed by an event of still greater importance,—that of the city of Lyons. The *Politics*, who were very numerous, resolved to place that large, beautiful, and populous city, under kingly obedience; and they secretly sent a deputation to the monarch, requesting that he would second their views. Henry, therefore, directed colonel Alphonsus Ornano, who headed a corps of troops in Dauphiny, to hold himself in readiness to assist the natives of Lyons, as soon as they should stand in need of his interference. Ornano, being summoned by the three sheriffs of that city, named Liergues, Jacques, and De Sèves, repaired

to Lyons, near the suburb of Guillotière, during the night of the 7th or 8th of February, and continued there awaiting further orders. Jacques, accompanied by his two friends Liergues and De Sèves, seconded by a valiant troop of chosen citizens well armed, between three and four in the morning attacked the guard stationed at the end of the bridge; which they forced, after experiencing some resistance. While this affair was transacting, some other citizens of the royal party quitted their houses, crying, "*Success to French liberty!*" at the same time affixing chains across the ends of the streets, so that the city was speedily barricadoed in all directions. On the following morning the inhabitants were seen in various quarters wearing white scarfs; and immediately the cries of "*Long live the king!*" echoed throughout the place; bonfires were kindled in the streets and squares; the arms of Spain, Nemours, and Savoy were torn down from the edifices to which they had been affixed; and the populace represented the League under the form of a hideous old witch, and cast the effigy into the flames, uttering a thousand imprecations. Tables were then spread before the mansions of the citizens, to which the people flocked, drinking to the health of their sovereign; and it is worthy remark, that the loyal inhabitants of that immense city, although troops were without its gates, did not think fit to summon the forces until they had of themselves effected this glorious revolution.

About two o'clock in the evening of the same day, colonel Ornano entered the city, accompanied only by his officers, and a long train of gentlemen, all wearing white scarfs and feathers of the same colour: the city had submitted, and these warriors only appeared for the purpose of maintaining good order. By the king's instructions, Ornano was sedulously occupied in moderating popular animosity against the leaguers. The seven sheriffs who had been seized, with Rubis, director of the town-hall, and author of numerous libels against the king, were set at liberty, being permitted to return to their mansions and enjoy their fortunes: they, however, retired from Lyons. The archbishop was also desirous of quitting the city; but having received assurances of safety on manifesting the fears he entertained on account of his former devotion to the League and Mayenne, he was invited to remain, and consented; when he surrendered up the castle of Pierre-Encise, and placed in the king's hands the duke of Nemours, his prisoner.

This succession of fortunate events spread the greatest alarm throughout Paris, among the Council of Sixteen, and the partisans of Mayenne;—a feeling that became more pronounced, as the greater portion of the inhabitants, though with timidity, demonstrated sentiments for royalty which only awaited a favourable opportunity to become manifest. Count de Belin, governor of the capital, had not been able to conceal his regard for Henry since the memorable conflict at

Arques, at which period, when made prisoner, he had beheld the prince so great and intrepid amidst a mere handful of soldiers, fearlessly braving a whole army, which he succeeded in vanquishing. The count, being suspected by Mayenne, was deprived of the government of the city; which was taken from him, notwithstanding the representations of the parliament, and the regrets of the people, by whom Belin was beloved on account of his kindness and moderation: the post was, in consequence, confided to Brissac. Count Belin, irritated at this injustice, withdrew, and joined the king, who received him with open arms; for Henry, never harbouring a doubt as to the sincerity of the rebels who repaired to his standard, not only welcomed them without rancour, but with every demonstration of joy and gratitude; he even deigned to grant them all the rights of old servants; but by such conduct he equally inspired them with all that attachment which characterized his staunch adherents. Count Belin proved eminently serviceable to the king in the reduction of Paris, by the advice he gave, and the intelligence secretly forwarded to him from the city.

The leaguers equally banished from Paris many suspected persons, and a number of the *Politics*, all of whom went to join the king. This tyrannical conduct, while it rendered the government odious, made known to the public that the most praiseworthy men were all royalists; a reflection that increased the number of secret partisans of

the monarch, and accelcrated the submission of Paris, which was, however, preceded by the surrender of Orleans and Bourges, delivered up by La Chartre, on the same conditions as those accorded to Meaux; La Chartre preserving the government of those cities, but, being more interested than the marquis de Vitry, exacting the promise of a staff of marshal of France, with twenty thousand crowns ready money for the liquidation of his debts.

Henry feeling anxious that the ceremony of his coronation should take place, and being unable to have it performed at Rheims, of which place the leaguers were masters, consulted the most enlightened ecclesiastics on the subject, who assured him that the inauguration might be performed in any other church; in consequence of which, the monarch selected the cathedral of Chartres, wherein Louis the Fat had been crowned some centuries before. Instead of the *Saint Ampoule* of Rheims, they had recourse to that preserved at Marmoutiers, which was solemnly conveyed by the monks of that institution, conducted by Souvré, governor of Tours. The coronation was performed without magnificence; but it was not the less imposing and august, as no external pomp was capable of encreasing the splendour of a ceremony where Henry the Great was seen at the foot of the altar surrounded by the princes of the blood, his nobility and warriors, receiving with due solemnity the royal crown of his ancestors, which fortune had com-

pelled him to acquire by so many victories and arduous labours!

At this august ceremony, marshal Matignon exercised the functions of constable, the count de Saint Paul those of grand master, while the dukes of Longueville and Bellegarde officiated as chamberlain and grand equerry. The peers of France were represented by the princes of the blood, with the dukes of Piney, de Retz, and Ventadour. In regard to the ecclesiastical peers, as many of those dignities were vacant, or such as possessed them continued attached to the League, the whole body was represented by those bishops who officiated on this occasion. The archbishop of Bourges, elected to that of Sens, metropolitan of Chartres, pretended in that quality, and from his archiepiscopal dignity, that he ought to personify the archbishop of Rheims; but Nicholas de Thou, bishop of Chartres, maintained the honour belonged to him, because the canons prohibited archbishops the performance of any function in the diocese of their suffragans. In consequence, the archbishop desisting from his pretension, the bishop of Chartres performed the ceremony in his cathedral, on the 27th of February 1594. On the following day, after vespers, the king was invested with the order of the Holy Ghost in the same church, and by the hands of the bishop from whom he had received his crown.

The news of Henry's inauguration diffused joy throughout the realm, and particularly at Paris,

where the zeal and hopes of the partisans of royalty were increased. The king having been informed that it was necessary to delay for fifteen days longer the grand enterprise which he meditated, employed that period in the most useful manner. Being uniformly desirous of maintaining peace around him, he effected a reconciliation between two princes of the blood, namely, count de Soissons and the duke de Montpensier, who had long been rivals, owing to a dispute concerning the prerogatives of their rank, their competition for similar places, and, more than all, on account of a rivalship in regard to love and ambition. They were both enamoured of princess Catherine, the king's sister, by whom, as we have previously said, the count de Soissons was beloved; yet the monarch, with as much pains as patience, in the end effected a reconciliation. Notwithstanding this, however, Henry had the greatest cause for resentment, as we have before hinted, against the count de Soissons; and at the particular period when he had just cause to be irritated, he, at the count's request, rendered him the most essential services. The king, under the preceding reign, had prevented Henry the Third from doing Soissons great injustice, by taking his part, and falsifying various imputations laid to his charge. All these details are to be found in manuscript letters addressed by Henry the Great to his predecessor, a most precious collection in the possession of the count de Couteulx de Canteleu, which has been referred to in the progress of these pages. In one of those documents, speak-

ing of the count de Soissons to Henry the Third, the king concludes with these words: "*I know that he does not love me; from whence you may form an opinion of the candour of my nature, and that I speak the truth.*" It was merely to prove his impartiality, and to annex more weight to his defence, that Henry made an avowal of the count's *not loving him;* in short, he prevented his disgrace, and most assuredly never was generosity carried farther.

After succeeding in his good offices between Soissons and Montpensier, the king strove to effect his own reconciliation with Villars; charging Rosny with the negotiation, who instantly proceeded to Rouen, of which city Villars still continued governor.

This general, as if he had been engaged with a foreign power, set a most exorbitant price on the treaty of peace which his master deigned to propose; but with very few exceptions, such was the conduct adopted by the rebels in general. The demands of Villars were, first, that the post of admiral should be continued to him, of which he was deprived by the League, that dignity having been conferred on Biron; secondly, that he should enjoy in his government a power independent of the duke of Montpensier, governor of the province, at least for the term of three years; thirdly, an assurance that all the officers placed by the League in cities dependent upon his government, should be continued with fifteen hundred infantry and three hundred cavalry, to be

maintained by the king, for the safety of those towns; fourthly, that one hundred and twenty thousand livres should be paid for the liquidation of his debts, with a pension of sixty thousand; lastly, that the town of Fecamp should be given up to him, as well as the monasteries of Jumiege, Tiron, Bonport, Lavalase, Montivilliers, and Saint Taurin. It excites an historian's indignation to think that a mere subject, who should only have aspired to procure a generous silence in regard to the past, should have dared to propose such conditions; but examples of similar audacity had been multiplied for a considerable length of time. It was not sufficient that Henry should conquer his own kingdom, it was also requisite for him to purchase it; he was at the same time called upon to recompense the fidelity of his friends, and pay for the submission of rebels.

To treat thus with culpable subjects was certainly forgetting what was due to his royal dignity: Henry, the most warlike monarch of his age, could have possessed himself of all those places by force of arms; but he felt horror at the thoughts of civil war, and he esteemed no sacrifice too exorbitant which could accomplish its termination. Rosny was vested with full powers to conclude with Villars; the abbey of Saint Taurin, demanded by the latter, was his own property, notwithstanding which he voluntarily yielded up his right; but he was impeded by the two articles whereby Montpensier was to be divested of his government for three years, and

Biron to lose the post of admiral. He required time to write to the king upon these heads, and went some leagues distant from Rouen, whither several affairs called him in order to await the reply. During this period two inveterate leaguers very artfully formed the blackest plot, in order to prevent Villars from ratifying his treaty with the king. The general possessed great uprightness of character, but he was the most passionate man in existence. By means of false witnesses and numerous specious artifices, he was led to believe that Rosny's project was to cause his assassination, and then take possession of Rouen. The latter, having no suspicion of these calumnies, returned to the city with the treaty ratified by the king, who engaged to procure the consent of Montpensier and Biron to the sacrifice of all that was exacted from them. Rosny, overjoyed in being at length able to conclude a negotiation to which Henry attached the greatest importance, proceeded direct to the residence of Villars, feeling, as he himself expresses it in his Memoirs, "a real pleasure in surprising Villars, as he by no means calculated upon so prompt an answer: Rosny, therefore, holding in one hand the treaty, and in the other a white scarf hidden under his mantle, intended to throw the same round the neck of Villars when embracing and saluting him as admiral and governor of Rouen and the territory of Caux."

Rosny, however, did not long maintain his jocular air; for, the moment Villars perceived him,

he advanced with rapid strides, his countenance swelled and inflamed, and his eyes sparkling with fury, when, snatching the treaty from his hand, he tore it in pieces, trampled it under foot, and, without giving Rosny time to utter a syllable, gasping with passion, loaded him with invectives.

With the greatest *sang-froid* Rosny suffered this passion against him to subside; after which he required an explanation; obtained it, and then justified himself from the imputation in a manner that admitted of no doubt. Villars, in consequence, summoned his secretary, who had been one of the principal authors of this base calumny; upon which, being strictly interrogated by Rosny, he was confounded, and finally confessed every thing; when Villars ordered him to be hanged. In consequence of this, it became necessary to have the treaty re-executed, which was signed; and from that moment, adds Sully, Villars never swerved from the sentiments of submission and attachment which were due to the monarch, who had every reason to regard him as faithful as any of his oldest friends and adherents.

On this occasion the dukes of Montpensier and Biron conducted themselves with a disinterestedness that conferred honour upon them. Scarcely had the king hinted at the subject, when both those noblemen exclaimed they were too happy to have it in their power to make a useful sacrifice, and that they joyfully relinquished all Villars had exacted. Henry felt this liberal conduct as a king, giving to the duke de Montpensier, by

way of an equivalent, the governments of Perche and Maine to be added to that of Normandy, on its being restored to him; which disposition, however, was not effected, owing to the generosity of Villars, who of his own accord, as will appear in the sequel, renounced that condition of the treaty. Biron, as a requital for the title of admiral, was invested with the staff of a French marshal, and four hundred thousand livres in specie. It was however agreed, for several political reasons, that the terms entered into with Villars should be kept secret for some time.

Every thing announced that the whole of France was on the eve of acknowledging its legitimate monarch, and that Paris was ready to throw open her gates. The duke de Mayenne, deceived by Spain, which had performed none of its promises, abandoned by the governors of cities and provinces, as well as by his officers and the creatures of his bounty, could no longer be blind to his real situation. The king offered him peace on terms no less advantageous than honourable to himself and family. Villeroy and Jeanin, the only persons who remained firmly attached to the duke, pressed him to accept the propositions, but in vain; a false political calculation made him persist in a useless rebellion, and maintain a cause evidently lost beyond all hope. The duke, perhaps, imagined, that, not having ratified a peace at the time of Henry's abjuration, it became necessary for the honour of his character, that he should await his absolution being sent by

the pope; added to which, new succours arriving from Spain, he was desirous of joining them to see if any thing could yet be effected. He, however, knew beforehand that this feeble assistance would not stop the career of fortune which had declared itself in favour of the rightful cause; but it was a last chance, which he was determined to essay, and he would have repented had it not been attended to, for the ambitious are gifted with stern consciences, which never fail to reproach them, to the very tomb, for any voluntary omission or negligence of the most trifling means of success.

The duke de Mayenne, prior to his departure from Paris, established bodies of guards and patrols, in order to stop any seditious movements; nor did he feel ashamed of animating the remnants of the detestable faction of *Sixteen*, by which self-debasement he did not perceive the inconsistency of his conduct. In fact, if justly considered, it was not so; since, having nearly annihilated that faction to forward his own views, he only strove to give it vigour upon a similar principle.

Mayenne flattered himself with keeping the citizens in check by the assistance of cut-throats, whose fury he reanimated, and by the aid of the *Minotiers*, comprised of the vilest class of the population, thus named, because the Spaniards allowed them one *minot* (an ancient measure equivalent to three bushels) of corn every week. The duke assembled the captains of the different quarters of Paris, recommending them to adhere to

their fidelity and obedience, announcing his journey, promising a speedy return, and adding, he left by way of guarantee that which was most precious in existence, his wife and his children; but on the following day he conducted them with him, leaving Brissac complete master of the city.

Brissac, bold in his opinions and projects, but versatile in his conduct, was the first who had placed the barricadoes against Henry the Third. He next appeared to coalesce with Mayenne; but after his quitting Paris, conceived the idea of making France a republic, constituting Paris the capital of this new state, the foundation of which he intended to model after that of ancient Rome. Brissac confided this project to some noblemen and several partisans of the League, who listened coldly to his proposals, and he abandoned his plan. Having renounced republican tenets, he then proceeded to occupy himself solely for his own personal interest, and merely accepted the government of Paris with a view of bettering his fortune. In the service of Henry was one Saint Luc, a Calvinist, and brother-in-law of Brissac, whom he deputed to go to Paris under pretext of family affairs, and to sound the mind of Brissac. The *rendezvous* took place at the monastery of Saint Anthony, whither Brissac was accompanied by advocates and jurisconsults; and while they were deliberating on the affair which served as a pretext for this interview, Saint Luc, in the same apartment, drew Brissac aside under the archway

of a lofty window, where he conversed with him in a half-whisper. Moments were precious, and in such cases persons the most deceptive hasten as much as possible to make themselves understood. Brissac, on the first intimation of Saint Luc, manifested his desire to serve the king, and deliver Paris into his hands; upon which, the latter made the most advantageous proposals on the part of Henry, which were frankly accepted by Brissac; who then suddenly turning round to the legal advisers, and both pretending to be resolutely fixed on maintaining their reciprocal pretensions, separated, to all appearance highly dissatisfied with each other.

Mezeray states, that in order to carry on this farce with greater success, Brissac on re entering the capital, went and threw himself at the feet of the pope's legate, craving absolution after holding a conference with an heretic. He then took his measures, and secretly held conference with the leaders of the royal party in Paris, consisting of Molé, the procurator-general; counsellors Amour and Du Vair; Lullier, provost of the merchants, and Neret and Lenglet, the sheriffs, with whom he formed the most efficacious plans for the success of this great enterprise. In this secret convention, personal interests were not forgotten; and, every thing being agreed upon and sanctioned by the king, his majesty left Saint-Denis under pretext of journeying to Senlis. Henry commanded Vitry to remain in the environs of Paris, after having confided to him as well as

several of his captains, that the governor and principal inhabitants of the capital were to receive him in the city on the 22d of March. Some days prior to this many troops were summoned to Paris and lodged in various quarters, of whose services the provost of the merchants and the sheriffs were to take advantage, should necessity require their interference.

Brissac, perfectly calm in his operations, conducted himself with great address: to prevent the having recourse to arms and seditious assemblings of the populace: he acted only from parliamentary authority, taking advantage of their ordinances when it became necessary to proceed against the factious, while on other occasions he mitigated the useless rigour which he had been solicited to adopt. By this conduct, if he did not conciliate universal favour, he at least prevented his operations from being discovered, or even becoming suspected; in addition to which he found means for adducing pretexts to diminish the number of the Spanish guards usually employed. Having spread a report that the king had proceeded to Ruel, in order to gain Saint-Denis, where he was to receive a convoy of specie, Brissac directed captain Jacques Ferrarois to take with him two companies of the Spanish guards, in order to be upon the look-out; for which purpose they quitted Paris by the gate of Saint James, which was closed upon them, while those in the secret were commanded not to re-admit them; in short, Brissac took care

to post troops on whom he could place dependance at all the important avenues of the city.

It is possible to preserve a secret faithfully and render the truth impenetrable, but it is not so easy to dissemble that some great mystery lies concealed, and to prevent vague surmises on the subject from being buzzed abroad. A public presentiment seemed to advertise all the Parisians that a revolution was on the eve of exploding: the days were calculated; every individual, without knowing the reason, awaited the ensuing morning with a degree of anxious curiosity; the good citizens no longer made mention of the king's name without experiencing an emotion never felt before; they saw the long expected moment approaching which was to unravel the great mystery; but these uncertain and confused hopes were not unattended by great disquietudes. The rage of the enemies of public tranquillity was at its *acme;* those rebellious bigots had a foreboding that their reign would speedily terminate, and, as if anxious to enjoy to the last moment their abhorred existence, their secret terrors only gave birth to the most arrogant audacity, and their despair was characterized by fury. Some openly menaced a massacre of all the *Politics*, and others the destruction of those parts of the city that were suspected by means of a conflagration. The excess of these threats emboldened Brissac; for he felt that individuals

possessing any real means would not be guilty of so much imprudence.

Every thing being duly arranged, according to Mezeray and Sully, on the 21st of March, 1594, Brissac in secret assembled the colonels and captains of the different quarters of Paris, in the hotel of the provost of the merchants: from the period of the disgrace to which the council of *Sixteen* had been subjected, those posts were occupied by the most respectable citizens of Paris. In the assembly so convened by Brissac, an oath was taken that every thing should be sacrificed, if necessary, for the success of the great enterprise, of which he gave an ample account in detail. During this conference Brissac was, in general, the spokesman; and upon one occasion having quoted the following words from Holy Writ, "*Give unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's due:*"—the virtuous John L'Huillier, provost of the merchants, interrupted him, saying gravely, "*Yes, sir, it is necessary to render it up, and not to sell it.*" Brissac paid no attention to the force of these words, which applied so severely to his own conduct, but continued his conversation; after which, issuing his commands, he assigned to each his post, designating how he was to act in case of tumult, and then despatched every one to his respective quarters.

On the night when the enterprise was to be carried into effect, the *Sixteen* having some suspicion that Brissac secretly held a correspond-

ence with the king, and that the delivering up of the city was perhaps intended, made known the circumstance to the two Spanish commanders, the duke de Feria and Dom Diego d'Ibarra; who immediately ordered their men under arms, and proceeded to the governor to acquaint him with what they had heard, concealing, however, that part of the information which related to his being the principal party concerned. Brissac replied with great calmness, that he did not imagine any thing was to be apprehended; yet, as nothing ought to be neglected, he would in person go his rounds upon the ramparts, requiring that some Spanish captains should accompany him. The duke de Feria complied, at the same time giving them secret orders to poniard Brissac in case they perceived any movement of a suspicious nature. It was then only midnight; it had been agreed not to meet the king until four in the morning; and, in consequence, every thing appeared perfectly tranquil; and Brissac, by two o'clock, returned with the Spanish captains, who were very much fatigued and completely satisfied. The *Sixteen* also continued keeping watch during part of the night, and did not retire until three o'clock.

These hours, however, did not pass without much uneasiness being manifested in the royal camp; the king was on the eve of delivering himself up to the faith of a man who had once revolted against his sovereign Henry the Third, and who in this instance betrayed his friend the

duke de Mayenne! It was requisite to enter a city defended by a garrison composed of Spaniards, and which also contained within its walls a number of fanatic cut-throats, capable of perpetrating any crime. The means of committing treason were not only easy, but well secured; and to employ them Spain would have spared neither treasures nor rewards of any description. In short, every thing was to be apprehended from Brissac, whose character was so calculated to inspire suspicion, and whose republican sentiments were so generally known. Notwithstanding these terrifying reflections, it was requisite to act with confidence and unreservedness, or break, without any pretext, the most important and best concerted enterprise. Henry in this dilemma wholly abandoned himself to Providence, the only resource of religious minds under circumstances in which all the prudence and wisdom of human nature cannot fortify the soul against irresolution.

On Tuesday the 22d of March, at four in the morning, the sheriff Langlois quitted Paris by the gate Saint-Denis, in order to join the king; when he met Vitry with his small body of troops, accompanied by several gentlemen, whom he escorted back to the gate Saint-Denis, of which he surrendered up the keys. The royal troops arrived in succession, maintaining the greatest silence, spreading themselves along the boulevards; while the garrisons of Corbeil and Melun, having descended by the river, were received at

the arsenal by an individual named Grossier, who commanded there, and was devoted to the monarch. Henry, at the head of eight thousand men, at five in the morning presented himself at the *New* gate, where he found the provost of the merchants, and the sheriffs, who presented him the keys of the city; which the king received, thanking those magistrates in the most affectionate terms. At the same time Louis de Montmorency Boutteville, commanding another corps, repaired to the quay of *L'Ecole*, where encountering a party of the Spanish lansquenets, who refused to cry *Long live the King!* and placed themselves in a posture of defence, he cut them in pieces and cast their bodies into the river. All the royal forces having arrived without encountering the least obstacle, they took possession of the principal posts, stationed a strong guard at the palace, at the great and little Chatelet, the avenues to the bridges, and in the principal public squares; while the citizens, armed, and mingling with the soldiery, incessantly repeated the cry of *Long live the King, and Peace!* The council of *Sixteen* and their adherents, petrified with astonishment, did not dare appear, and continued shut up in their dwellings; so that in less than three hours every thing was as tranquil as if a long peace had blessed the city. Nothing was heard but incessant acclamations, while every face displayed an expression of joy and security. The king slowly proceeded in his march, surrounded by an immense population: when passing

along the street Saint-Honoré, Henry, perceiving that a soldier forcibly took a loaf of bread from a baker's shop, ran up sword in hand, and menaced him with death. This action completely established confidence, so that a number of shops which had remained shut up were all opened a few minutes afterwards. During this momentous day and several that followed, there was not the least tumult, not a robbery was committed, nor a single insult offered.

Count de Brissac proceeded to meet the king, and presented him with a magnificent scarf embroidered with gold, which the monarch received, giving him his own in return, and then embracing him, presented the staff of a marshal of France; and, according to the convention entered into with Saint-Luc, accompanied the same with an hundred thousand crowns. Henry proceeded direct to the cathedral of *Notre Dame*, and on his way thither, passing the bridge, he became so sensibly affected by the acclamations and transports of the multitude that he shed tears in abundance, exclaiming, "*I can plainly perceive how these poor people have been tyrannized over!*" At the portal of the church he alighted, the crowd being so great that he was carried on the people's shoulders; upon which the captains of his guard being anxious to disperse the multitude, Henry cried out, "*Let them alone, they are starving to have a sight of their king.*" Henry, alluding to his entrance into the cathedral, in a letter written to Gabrielle d'Etrées, says: "*An old woman of eighty*

came up to me, put her arms round my head, and kissed me; at which I was not the first who laughed heartily." After hearing mass, and the *Te Deum* being performed, the king repaired to the Louvre, where he learned that the duke de Feria had assembled the troops in the garrison, amounting to three thousand men, being resolved to defend himself in case of attack. Henry despatched the count de Saint Pol to assure him that he need be under no apprehension in regard to his resentment; for that, although with the troops under his orders, he might annihilate the whole Spanish force, he would not spill a drop of blood, or profit by a certain advantage over his implacable enemies; that he was disposed to grant him an honourable capitulation, provided only that captain Saint Quentin was given up, whom the Spaniards had seized upon, suspecting him of carrying on a correspondence with the royalists. That officer was immediately surrendered to count Saint Pol; upon which the capitulation was drawn up, the king permitting the duke de Feria to quit Paris that very day with drums beating and flags flying, but the matches of their locks extinguished.

The king being desirous of seeing captain Saint Quentin, the latter threw himself at the monarch's feet, returning thanks for his life, which he owed to Henry, as he was to have been hanged in the afternoon of that day in the court-yard of the hotel Longueville. On this occasion the king, smiling, said, "*Captain, you have had real cause for fear;*

and since you are no Spaniard, but a Frenchman, I take you into my service, and will recompense your zeal."

At three o'clock in the afternoon of the same day the duke de Feria, Don Diego d'Ibarra, and John Baptist Taxis the Spanish ambassador, quitted Paris with their troops, accompanied by thirty of the most desperate leaguers, whom the king permitted to accompany them. Henry issued the most rigid orders that no insult should be offered them in their retreat, and these generous commands were punctually attended to. The monarch, as they left the city, stood at one of the windows of the palace to behold them; and as they passed, said to the ambassador, "*Sir, present my respects to your master, but do not think of returning.*"

All the Spaniards, with their caps in hand, respectfully saluted the monarch, bending low their heads; and were escorted as far as Bourget by Saint-Luc and the baron de Salignac.

In the course of the day, some persons being anxious to speak with the king on business, he made this remark: "*I must candidly confess to you, that I feel so inebriated with joy to find myself where I am, as not to be conscious of any thing you say to me, nor what I ought to answer.*"

Two or three persons having remarked that his excess of clemency towards some leaguers who were sullied by crimes of the greatest atrocity might be productive of ill, Henry made the following answer, truly worthy a Christian monarch: "*If you, and all those who hold such language, were every*

day to repeat your paternoster, you would not express yourselves as you do. For myself, I acknowledge that all my victories are to be attributed to the Almighty, who has in a peculiar manner extended his mercy towards me, insomuch that I am conscious of my own unworthiness. And as he has pardoned me, even so do I wish to pardon, and, by forgetting the faults of all, prove more merciful than I have hitherto been. If there are some who have forgotten themselves, it is sufficient for me that they are aware of their misconduct; therefore let no one henceforth speak to me upon the subject."

Henry invited cardinal Plaisance, the pope's legate, to visit him; that dignitary, however, refused to comply, and left the city; but he did not proceed so far as Rome, being taken ill upon the road from excessive fatigue, which terminated in his death.

Scarcely had the king entered the Louvre, when he despatched a message to the duchesses of Montpensier and Nemours: the former, on learning the surrender of Paris, calling to her recollection with terror the furious conduct she had uniformly pursued, cried out: "*I am lost! shall I not find a friend to strike a dagger into my heart?*" Her astonishment, however, was indescribable, when a message was delivered to her from his majesty, that she might remain perfectly at her ease, as no violence should be offered to her person, her mansion, or her goods.

The king on the following day, according to Mezeray and Brantome, proceeded to pay a visit

to madame de Nemours, where he found the duchess of Montpensier; upon which he enquired in the most open and smiling manner, whether they were not much astonished to behold him at Paris, and still more to find no citizen had been pillaged or robbed, and that there was not a man who could complain of the loss of a straw? Then turning to the duchess of Montpensier, he said: "What do you think of that, cousin?"—"Sire," answered the duchess, "it is impossible to do other than confess that you are a great monarch, abounding with benignity, clemency, and generosity. There is only one thing I should have desired in the reduction of your capital, which is, that my brother the duke de Mayenne had himself lowered the drawbridge to give you admittance." "But," said the king, smiling, "he might have made me wait too long, and in that case, I should not have entered so early in the morning."

In the evening, the king publicly invited the duchess de Montpensier to play at cards with him, a stretch of bounty which led her to apprehend nothing like the scaffold, or an exile, which was the least she had a right to expect; but shame still continued to haunt her, and her sullied name becoming more connected with the page of history from Henry's greatness of soul, received one wound the more, and the most deadly stab to her celebrity.

On rising the following morning, says Perefixe, the king, in presence of all the gentlemen of his

court, performed an act which proved more than ever that no prince knew better than himself how to connect rigid justice with the most feeling generosity. Lanoue, the son of the brave captain surnamed *Iron-arm*, of whom we have previously had occasion to speak, presented himself with great emotion, to complain to the king that his creditors had made a seizure on his equipages, requesting his majesty to arrest the course of law proceedings. "*Lanoue*," exclaimed the monarch, in an elevated tone of voice, "*it is necessary that every man should liquidate his debts: I always pay mine!*" Lanoue, a very brave and experienced officer, felt dissatisfied, and maintained a mournful silence; scarcely, however, had a quarter of an hour transpired, ere Henry led him to his private apartment, and then said: "*I have just been compelled to speak to you publicly in the language of a king; I am now going to address you as a friend. Here are my jewels, go place them as security in the hands of your creditors until I have it in my power to give you the sum of which you stand in need.*"

On the following day, the faculty of theology presented itself to offer its submission to the king; who deigned to give an account of his faith, and do away all scruples in the minds of its members by a detailed and sincere avowal of his religious sentiments. The doctors of the Sorbonne solicited that he would manifest towards them the effects of his clemency and mercy in pardoning them for the decrees and resolutions

which had been extorted from them by means of fear and violence; upon which Henry assured them, that he was desirous of living in the catholic religion; that he forgot every thing, and freely pardoned all: such was the desire he manifested to unite his subjects by gentleness, particularly those of the church, and above all, the corps of faculty of the Sorbonne, which he had always honoured and loved.

Two or three preachers, carried away by fanaticism, dared give vent to dangerous insinuations, and some priests refused to offer up nominal and public prayers for his majesty; but when it was represented to the king that they ought to be punished, he replied, "*We must wait a little, they still continue angry.*" During the first days after the capture of Paris, De Bourg, governor of the Bastille, surrendered that fortress to the king, retiring from the castle decorated with a black scarf, which had been that adopted by Mayenne and the leaguers after the assassination of the duke of Guise, being at the same time a sign of mourning and the signal for vengeance. De Bourg had the generosity neither to solicit or accept any thing for the surrender of that fortress: he announced in the first instance, that, being unprovided with forces to maintain a siege, he supplicated that his majesty would permit him to retire as soon as he should have surrendered up his charge to the person whom he thought fit to delegate. He was then entreated to attach himself to so great and generous a prince; upon

which he made answer, "that he was fully aware of his eminent qualities and his virtues, but that he was the servant of the duke de Mayenne, to whom he had sworn fidelity." De Bourg was permitted to retire, though much regretted by Henry; and on the same day the castle of Vincennes was also given up by Beaulieu, its commander.

The king terminated these acts of clemency and generosity, in uniting to the parliament of the League the remains of that same assembly which had established its sittings at Tours and Chalons, which, say De Thou and Mezeray, was not accomplished without some difficulty. The loyal members claimed rewards or distinctions, to the prejudice of those who had suffered themselves to be led away by the League; upon which the king said, that if the members who continued at Paris had been forced by the leaguers and the Spaniards to adopt measures contrary to his interests, they had obliterated that fault by the conduct since pursued; that he was aware the major part of them had exposed their fortunes and their lives by continuing in the city, to be enabled to render him important services; that they had equally contributed with his most faithful subjects in placing the city of Paris under his subjection; and that if there were some of whom he had uniform cause for complaint, they were so few in number that he was not desirous of making an odious distinction at a period so truly glorious to himself.

In fact, says Anquetil in his Spirit of the League, the king was under real obligations to the major part of that body which remained in the capital, and, in particular, to Edward Molé, who had caused a parliamentary edict to be passed respecting the Salique law, and who subsequently contributed in bringing back the city to its due allegiance. Henry had carried on a secret correspondence with that magistrate, whose counsels directed his proceedings; while Molé, by his prudence and firmness, disposed all minds to submission and peace. The king requited the services of this faithful statesman by appointing him president; and he rewarded the others as far as the nature of existing circumstances would permit. Neither did Henry forget to testify his gratitude to Peter de Belloy, who during the first siege of Paris, and amidst the cries of the factious, dared raise his voice in favour of the legitimate princes. This courageous man was an advocate, and issued a work entitled "*A Catholic Apology for Henry the Third and the King of Navarre against the Libels of the seditious and conspiring*," a work abounding with force and eloquence, written by a catholic then shut up in Paris: the same author also issued other learned productions in order to prove the right of Henry the Fourth to the crown of France; as a reward for which heroic zeal he endured close confinement for three years. Upon the king's entry into Paris he hastened to liberate his virtuous defender, and honoured him with the charge of

advocate general of the parliament of Toulouse; added to which the monarch retained in their places all those who had received appointments from Mayenne; whereby was verified a ludicrous observation of the time, *that Mayenne produced bastards in order that they might one day be legitimatized at his own expense.* Henry felt how truly important it was that no traces of division should remain between the united members of his parliament, and how essential it was to establish concord by a perfect equality; this he particularly desired, and he was scrupulously obeyed. In compliance with his orders, every thing was obliterated from the registers, which the misfortunes of the times had caused to be inserted, contrary to the laws and the respect due to the sovereign.

The king caused two declarations to be promulgated; and as the parliament was suspended, they were addressed by an extraordinary form to the chancellor, the dukes and peers of France, counsellors of state, &c.: the first re-establishing the presidents and counsellors who had remained in Paris, provided they would make oath of their fidelity to the king between the hands of the chancellor; the second, after recapitulating in a succinct manner the artifices the chiefs of the League and the Spaniards had conjointly employed to seduce the people and ruin the state, granted a general amnesty, to all persons, for every thing that had taken place since the period of the Barricadoes, except what had been perpetrated in form of theft, and the crimes

committed between persons of the same party, and those who should be judged guilty of having abetted in the assassination of the deceased monarch, or of conspiring against the life of the reigning sovereign.

After having captivated the Parisians by so much gentleness, generosity, and prudence, the king edified them by a solemn act of piety, in assisting with his principal nobility and the officers of the high courts at a general procession; which ceremony was renewed every year upon the 22d of March, in memory of the surrender of Paris, until the period of the Revolution.

While Henry established in his capital good order, unanimity, and peace, Rosny, by his command, repaired to Rouen in order to give publicity to the treaty concluded between his majesty and Villars, previously spoken of, and which political reasons had led the king to keep secret until the reduction of Paris. Rosny found at the mansion of Villars deputies from the League and Spain, who, totally ignorant of the dispositions and engagements of Villars, were using all their efforts to attach him to the cause of Spain. Villars, without explaining himself, had invited those deputies in order to enjoy their confusion when detailing all the events that had transpired at the capital; Rosny also remained to sup, postponing until the ensuing day his commission for Villars. This was truly establishing himself in the face of his enemies; for the leaguers and the Spaniards could not with plea-

sure behold, associated with a man whom they had so much interest in preserving to their party, a royalist devoted to his sovereign; and the more so, as they imagined that Rosny was charged with a mission from the king. Nothing more clearly demonstrates the manners of that period than the detail of the occurrences of this singular evening, as detailed by Sully, vol. ii. p. 326, &c; whereby it is apparent that at no period, either prior or subsequent, were politeness, finesse, urbanity, and every refined sentiment, carried to a greater length.

On the following day, Villars found means to dismiss the Spaniards and the deputies from the League, who left Rouen, when Villars conducted Rosny to the grand square of the city, where, according to his directions, the latter found assembled all the principal inhabitants of the city. The crowd proved so great, that Rosny and his suite with great difficulty cleared the way. On meeting the governor, Rosny said in an elevated tone, that the king being now a good catholic, it was time he should give him a proof of his zeal: upon which Villars made answer, that he was in heart one of the most devoted subjects of his majesty, and that if nothing further was required than his assuming the white scarf, he was ready to receive the insignia immediately. Rosny then drew one from his pocket; and Villars had no sooner placed it over his shoulder, than he exclaimed with all the energy of a soldier, that the League was exterminated; upon which turning to the multi-

tude, he added: "*Now, then, let every one cry, Long live the king!*" upon which, the profound silence which had reigned was immediately broken by a universal shout, to which were added the ringing of bells, and discharges of artillery; when the concourse assembled, repaired to the cathedral, at which a solemn *Te-Deum* was performed.

On the ensuing day, all the authorities waited upon Rosny to return him thanks for the ratification of a treaty that was due to him, and to present him with a service of plate: which he would only receive upon condition that it was delivered to the king, a line of conduct he uniformly adopted upon all similar occasions.

Villars, a few days after Rosny's departure, followed him to court, where he arrived attended by upwards of an hundred gentlemen, some of whom were the head nobility of France. On being introduced, he addressed the king with a noble but submissive air, at the same time throwing himself on his knee; upon which Henry raised him, spoke to him with affection, and immediately began to address the courtiers on the subject of the signal exploits Villars had performed, with an acuteness which bestowed additional lustre on the feats so recorded. Villars, on a sudden, perceiving the duke de Montpensier, advanced towards him, calling him his superior, and restoring to him the chief governorship of Rouen, that had been ceded by an article of the treaty. This generous action, which was altoge-

ther unexpected, agreeably surprised the king, and very sensibly affected the duke, who from that moment ranked Villars among the number of his most cherished friends.

Henry continued but three weeks at Paris, having only had time to pardon and bestow favours; and when on the point of yielding himself up to public affairs, he learned that count de Mansfeld and the duke de Mayenne had laid siege to La Capelle in Thierache, marshal Biron not having had sufficient time to assemble troops to prevent the attack in question. The king left Paris on the 11th of May, hoping that La Capelle, which was well fortified, would hold out in order to afford him time to succour it; but the citizens had capitulated on the 9th, after having undergone six days' siege. Henry was much dissatisfied, and by way of reprisal, immediately proceeded to invest Laon; the prince being wholly ignorant that the League had put that town, so strong from its situation, in a state to resist every attack that might be directed against it. After the taking of La Capelle, Mayenne had retired to Laon; but on hearing of the king's approach quitted the place, leaving in the town his second son the count de Sommerivè, Jeanin, and De Bourg, with a garrison of five hundred men. Mayenne immediately proceeded to Brussels for the purpose of supplicating the archduke Ernest to furnish him with fresh supplies of troops, in order that a place of such importance might not fall into the king's hands. In the interim, Henry,

who was apprehensive lest the archduke should yield to the entreaties of Mayenne, tendered proposals of peace to the president Jeanin, who, however, remained unalterably firm to the cause of the League. The king, irritated, had then recourse to means which he had never before employed, because they can only prove successful with cowards, and his great soul did not entertain an idea that such could exist: in the first instance therefore he menaced Jeanin, stating, that, in case he persisted in his obstinacy, he would one day repent his conduct. Jeanin made answer, that he feared nothing, because, although merely a magistrate, he nevertheless knew as well as a warrior how to expire in the breach.

During the first days of the siege Henry received letters from Paris, whereby he ascertained that the count d'Auvergne, natural son of Charles the Ninth and Mary Touchet, with the lord d'Entragues, his father-in-law, had commenced those proceedings which afterwards nearly brought his head to the block, and that the capital was filling with evil-disposed and rebellious people. Henry was further informed, that great disputes had arisen between the university and the jesuits, concerning the education of youth, the former being desirous of interdicting the latter from having any control. The king despatched Rosny to Paris, in order to ascertain for a certainty the existing state of things, who, being impatient to return to the siege of Laon, only continued three days at the capital; which

time sufficed to make him thoroughly acquainted with the dangerous intentions of the count d'Auvergne, and D'Entragues and his wife, the residence of those personages being the *rendezvous* of the enemies of the king, whether connected with the League or the Spanish party; secret councils being held there nightly against the interests and the service of the monarch.

Rosny proceeded with all expedition to Laon, and arrived at head-quarters at three in the evening, when he found Henry reposing between two mattresses placed on the ground. The king, during the two preceding nights, had remained in the trenches, ordering different works along the mountain, upon the summit of which Laon stands; and in performing this duty he had so lacerated his feet by the rocky soil, that the whole had produced a very serious wound. Henry enquired of Rosny whether he was not astonished to behold him in bed at such an hour; and then gave orders that the coverings should be raised from off his feet, *in order*, said the prince, *that he might ascertain the repose was by no means ill-timed;* an idea, says Sully, it was impossible to entertain, as Henry was only to be accused of acting too much in a contrary sense. Rosny then gave a detail of his mission, when the king was satisfied with merely writing to Paris, commanding Chiverny, Pont-Cané, and Belliévre to keep a strict watch over the proceedings of the factious.

The king, however, proceeded vigorously with the siege of Laon; when the enemies, being in

want of provisions, were desirous of procuring supplies from La Fère; but a convoy of two hundred waggons conducted by seven hundred men, was defeated and taken, and another consisting of four hundred waggons, guarded by twelve hundred foot and three hundred horse, experienced the same fate. The glory of this action was due to Biron and Sancy, who commanded the Swiss; Rosny being also present upon that occasion.

After these signal successes Henry conceived that Laon would soon be brought to surrender; but fresh intelligence arrived, by which he learned that the duke de Mayenne and count Mansfeld, far from being dispirited by these reverses, only talked of marching to attack the lines of the besiegers, as soon as they should receive the expected supplies. Marshal Biron and some others ridiculed these representations; but Henry, who never neglected any thing, despatched Givry with an escort of three hundred horse to *reconnoitre*, and with express orders not to return until he had acquired a perfect knowledge of the situation and force of the enemy. Givry, at the expiration of three days, returned with an account that there was not as yet a single company on that side of the Oise, and that the Spaniards certainly appeared more inclined to take the route for Flanders, than advance to the assistance of Laon. Henry, relying on the fidelity of this statement, made an appointment with some chosen officers to dine on the following day at Saint Lambert, a house

appertaining to the domains of Navarre, situated in the centre of a forest, where he recollected having formerly partaken of fruits and milk during his stay at the castle of Marle while he was yet a youth. The king, accompanied by Rosny and about thirty officers, partook of a pleasant repast at Saint Lambert, and after dinner repaired to the dairy of the castle, when, seating himself upon a bank, he fell into a sound sleep, having, according to custom, been engaged the greater part of the preceding night in the trenches before Laon. As the weather was intensely hot, Rosny and eight or ten others sought out a shady spot in the thickest part of the forest, not far from the grand route leading from La Fère to Laon. Scarcely, however, had they commenced their promenade, when a rumbling noise in the direction of La Fère made them halt, and, listening attentively, they caught the sound of confused murmurs of human voices, the cracking of whips, snorting of horses, and a din resembling the distant clangor of drums and trumpets. They immediately proceeded to the high road, when they distinctly beheld, eight hundred paces before them, a column of foreign infantry marching in good order and in silence; the sounds having proceeded from some valets and the conductors of a considerable convoy of artillery which they escorted. Rosny and his associates then looking intently in the distance, thought they beheld such a great body of troops defiling behind the waggons, that they no longer

doubted but that it was the whole army of the enemy. Returning, therefore, with all expedition, they repaired to the king, whom they found awake, and in the act of shaking down some fruit from a plum-tree. "*Sire,*" exclaimed Rosny, "*we have just beheld a troop pass, who are preparing for you other plums than those, and which will be found harder of digestion:*" upon which the whole fact was detailed in a few words. Immediately, and without feeling surprised or uttering reproaches against Givry, who was present, on the false report he had made, Henry ordered his horse and those of his suite. He instantly mounted and set off, followed by his attendants, at the same time directing, while at full speed, a dozen of his officers to repair with all expedition to the different quarters of the cavalry, a list of which he uniformly carried in his pocket, to give the alarm and press them to repair forthwith to the king's head-quarters, while others were commanded to visit the infantry, who were to form into battalions, and station themselves between head-quarters and the trenches. In his way the king met other officers, to whom he reiterated similar orders, with a precision that accompanies ripened reflection; which, says Sully, fortunately saved the whole army from the most imminent peril.

The king by this extraordinary presence of mind and activity secured his camp from an unexpected attack, ranged his army in order of battle before the trenches, and took the most

advantageous posts in order to ensure success. The adverse generals, however, did not wish to hazard a conflict, fearful of the ascendency and military prowess of their opponent. All they sought to accomplish by this manœuvre was, to force the king to raise the siege of Laon, and march towards them, hoping at the same time, that during the confusion occasioned by their unlooked-for arrival, they might succour the city with three thousand foot and three hundred horse, after which they intended to avoid any battle. However, as their real plan was only known by means of the prisoners afterwards captured, none of the royalists doubted but a general engagement would occur on the following day. In the midst of the plain which separated the adverse forces, was an isolated hill nearly round, of the greatest importance as regarded the besieged town if the enemies had taken possession of it; on that eminence the king planted two pieces of cannon, to strengthen a regiment which was intrenched; and there Rosny, having caused a hut to be formed, took up his quarters. On the following day, the enemies began to skirmish with all their musquetry, and endeavoured to gain possession of a small wood situated between the two camps: night coming on, and not being desirous of attempting more, they took advantage of the darkness, and without making any noise retreated to La Fère. Henry, satisfied that his opponents had covered themselves with shame, in consequence of attempting an enterprise so badly con-

ceived and ill executed, suffered the foe to depart in order to spare a useless effusion of blood, and succeed in effecting the capture of Laon. On the 22nd of July, the town capitulated, promising to surrender in twelve days, if, before the expiration of that term, the duke de Mayenne should not have thrown a thousand men into the place. Mayenne, in fact, did send succours, but, as they arrived near Laon too late to be able to surprise the besiegers, they judged it expedient to remain concealed in the woods, where they continued during the night, and part of the ensuing day. By a singular chance, Henry went to the forest to enjoy the pleasures of hunting; when, happening to approach that part where the forces lay concealed, the hounds smelt them out, there being nine hundred Spanish soldiers, who, instead of shewing themselves, and attacking the king accompanied only by three hundred horse, conceived that they might avoid discovery if scattered about in small parties; but the dogs persevering in their pursuit, and Henry with his party arriving at that juncture, they were taken in such disorder, that, without being compelled to come to any regular attack, the huntsmen and attendants forced the enemy to surrender, and became masters of a rich booty.

After this fatal reverse, young count Sommerive, son of the duke de Mayenne, Du Bourg, and Jeanin, who defended Laon, finding it was impossible to resist the tumultuous movements of the citizens and garrison, deemed it expedient

to deliver up the place before the expiration of the term stipulated. The garrison, on surrendering, obtained the honours of war, and security for those individuals who were attached to Mayenne, and, in particular, his son, who commanded the city. Henry was desirous of seeing the count; when he extolled his courage, and desired him to deliver a message to his father, couched in amicable terms.

The unremitting perseverance displayed by the monarch in reducing Laon to its allegiance, tended to augment his military reputation. While this siege continued, and in the course of the ensuing month, several other towns voluntarily abandoned the cause of Mayenne, the principal of which were, Chateau-Thierry, Peronne, Amiens, Dourlens, Beauvais, and Noyon; so that, in Picardy, three places only held out for the League, namely, Soissons, Ham, and La Fère.

Mayenne, finding Laon gone, and nearly the whole of Picardy in the possession of his opponent, that the principal officers of the League, and the duke of Guise himself, were disposed to come to terms with the king, by the advice of Jeanin, conceived that it would be prudent to limit his wishes to the occupation of a single province, where he might render himself independent. With this view he fixed his attention upon Burgundy, and proceeded in the direction of that beautiful and fertile territory of France, after leaving strong garrisons in Dourlens, La Fère,

and Soissons. Independent of commanding a great portion of the province, its proximity to Savoy, Franche-Comté, Lorraine, Switzerland, and Germany, from whence he flattered himself with procuring large supplies, seemed to present the certain means of maintaining himself in safety. Having long entertained the idea of raising himself to the throne, the project of being satisfied with the sovereignty over a single province, far from appearing chimerical in his eyes, seemed, on the contrary, equally easy and moderate.

The duke de Mayenne, with a view of rendering himself monarch of Burgundy, at the same time calculated upon Spain, which appeared to enter into his views; but the Burgundians were not in a humour to make election of a subject for their master. Never, says Sully, did they testify more signal proofs of fidelity to their sovereign. The duke began by endeavouring to secure Beaune, marching thither a numerous garrison; the citizens, however, rose against the troops, attacked and compelled them to seek refuge in the castle. The inhabitants then fortified themselves against the fortress by means of barricadoes, and called to their assistance marshal Biron, whom they permitted, together with his little army, to continue within their walls for six weeks; during which period they maintained the soldiers at their own expense, sacrificing money and all they possessed with as much good will as they exposed their persons to danger. They voluntarily partook in all the perils and labours of the troops

whom they had summoned; they attacked the castle in form with a battery of twelve pieces of cannon, and so vigorously followed up their endeavours as finally to succeed in driving away the rebel forces; and it will soon appear that the city of Dijon displayed the same courage and unshaken fidelity. The first attempt of the natives of that city to place themselves under the royal authority was not attended by success. James Verne, mayor of the town, and captain Gau, having manifested their favourable sentiments towards the monarch, were denounced to Jeanin, who then happened to be at Dijon, when they were both arrested, tried on the instant with very few formalities, and condemned to death, Jeanin having the cruelty to cause their heads to be struck off. At the same juncture, says Mezeray, Avalon, Mâcon, and Auxerre, abandoned the cause of the Lèague, and opened their gates to the royalists. Henry was indebted for the surrender of Auxonne, another town of Burgundy, to Claude de Bauffremont Senaçay, newly returned from Rome; and the king, as a recompense for that service, appointed him governor of the place. Shortly after Henry's return to Paris, the duke of Guise, son of the prince assassinated at Blois, became reconciled to the monarch; Mayenne had given him the government of Champaine, which the duke of Guise confided to Saint-Pol, an officer, who, owing to an ambition by no means uncommon at that period, resolved to supplant his master, and

appropriate the charge to his own benefit. In order to effect this point, he proclaimed himself duke de Rethelois, and built a citadel in Rheims, his capital, in order to keep the populace in subjection, who had very little respect for his sovereignty. He levied heavy imposts, and made himself detested; but he filled his coffers, and became intoxicated with power. On the arrival of the duke of Guise, that prince vainly demanded restitution of his government, as Saint Pol proved by feasible arguments that between rebels to their king there is never any real right but that of actual possession; maintaining that he was duke de Rethelois, and acknowledged as such in Champaine; and that he governed in Rheims, and would there continue. Guise, enraged at such insolence, became furious, so that the two usurpers of the province proceeded to blows, when Guise ran the arrogant Saint Pol through the body, and by this means repossessed himself of that territory. Being very discontented with Mayenne, Guise was easily persuaded to acknowledge the royal authority; and was powerfully solicited thereto by the duchess, his mother; of whom Sully gives the following interesting description: "She was naturally so upright and just in her conduct, that she had not even the idea of evil; her gentleness was so predominant that she was alike unacquainted with the sentiments of hatred, malignity, or envy; nor was she ever found to indulge ill-humour. Never did a woman combine with conversation abounding in grace, a turn of

mind so *naïve*, free, and agreeable. Her repartees were replete with point and playfulness: so that she was at the same time gentle, lively, tranquil, and gay." This interesting personage became the intimate friend of Henry the Fourth, who very soon discovered her merits, and from that moment not only forgot all resentment, but conducted himself towards her with the frankness, familiarity, and confidence of an old friend. He deputed Chiverney, the chancellor, the duke de Retz, and Beaulieu Rusé, to consider the proposals of the duke of Guise, and transmit them to him; and during the whole progress of this affair, Henry manifested so much generosity, that it becomes necessary to enter into some detail of the transaction.

The three individuals deputed by the king to negotiate with Guise, had recourse to so much *ruse* and political pedantry, that at the end of ten days the preliminaries were not settled. The duchess of Guise, sensibly affected in consequence of these delays, presented herself one morning at the king's study, whom she found in conversation with Rosny, whose hand he held grasped within his own. She began by complaining with her accustomed sprightliness that his majesty should have confided the affair respecting her son to three individuals, who slowly proceeded by three different roads that terminated in nothing: the first never uttering words more decisive than, *we must see, we must consider, let us do something better:* the second not comprehend-

ing himself; and the third uniformly maintaining a tone of solemn grandeur. Henry laughed heartily at this description, which completely delineated the characters of the three negotiators. The duchess then actuated by her zeal for the king and tenderness towards her son, took the monarch by the hand, and kissing it in spite of him, supplicated that he would open his arms to the duke of Guise, and give her the supreme satisfaction of beholding him reinstated in the good graces of the sovereign. This excellent woman spoke with such heartfelt fervor that Henry was himself affected to tears, and then said, "Well, well, cousin, what is it you require of me? I can refuse no demand."—"Nothing," replied the duchess, "except that you would appoint as negotiator with my son him whose hand you hold."—"What!" exclaimed the king, "this wicked Huguenot? I freely accede to your wishes, although I am aware he is your relative, and loves you sincerely."

Rosny was in consequence appointed sole arbitrator in this delicate affair, who found little difficulty in arranging the business, the duke having a very urgent motive for terminating the affair, with which Rosny was wholly unacquainted. Guise had discovered that Rheims, which was the most valuable gift he could place at Henry's disposal, was desirous of submitting of its own accord to the king, and had made proposals in order to bring over the rest of the province to unite in sentiments of loyalty, in which it had

succeeded. The duke, therefore, concealing his apprehensions on this head, hastened to accept the advantageous proposals offered by the king; to which he could have had no pretensions, if his real situation had been made public. By the ensuing night, the treaty was terminated, and signed only by madame de Guise, the duke's three commissaries, and Rosny. On the following day at an early hour, the deputies from the city of Rheims arrived in Paris, and, immediately repairing to Rosny, stated that it was useless to give any great rewards to the duke of Guise, because he was not master of the surrender of Rheims, as the citizens themselves were anxious to yield that city up to his majesty. The deputies did not wish to confer with the king, stating that a written acknowledgment was all they required. They then offered Rosny a recompense of ten thousand crowns, which he at once refused; his delicacy not permitting him, even with the king's consent, to accept it on this occasion, as he had been previously nominated mediator by the duchess of Guise. Rosny instantly proceeded to make known to the king the nature of the deputation, who had not yet ratified the treaty; so that the duke was entirely at his mercy, and wholly incapable of insisting on a single condition: Henry might even have reproached him for concealing the actual state of things; however, without yielding to similar reflections, the magnanimous prince enquired of Rosny, whether he had signed the treaty; who, answering in the affirm-

ative, "You were delegated with my powers," said the monarch; "it is the same as if I had affixed my own signature; I shall therefore alter nothing."

Henry at the same time was not unmindful of the affection testified towards him by the inhabitants of Rheims, and he in consequence summoned the deputies to his presence, to whom he returned his thanks in the language of true royalty, loading them with presents, and displaying such gracious and honourable expressions towards them and their fellow-citizens, that he dismissed them overcome with joy and admiration.

The duchess of Guise, having gained her point, requested Henry's permission that her son should repair without delay and give his majesty personal assurances of his gratitude and submission. Guise had been written to in order that he might have timely notice not to require any other surety than the king's permission; and he in consequence instantly speeded to Paris. On being introduced to the monarch, the duke threw himself at his feet, and betrayed such unequivocal marks of sincere repentance, that Henry, who read the secrets of his soul, far from receiving him with an air of gravity, raised the duke affectionately, embraced him thrice, and then said: "Cousin, you are no great talker any more than myself; I know every thing you would utter; one word, however, will suffice: we are all liable to commit errors, and be guilty of youthful follies; I obliterate every thing

from my recollection, and let them never again be repeated. As you acknowledge me for that which I am, I will become as a father to you, nor is there any individual of the court that I behold with greater affection than yourself." After this, Henry loaded him with caresses, and without avoiding, or recalling the past, spoke of the deceased duke, his father, in terms of the most flattering eulogy; stating that they had been friends in their youth, though frequently rivals in the affections of the fair sex; that the excellent qualities of the duke, and a great similarity in their inclinations, had made them reciprocally entertain feelings of aversion towards the duke d'Alençon; in short, one friend desirous of being reconciled with another after a trifling difference, could not have manifested more grace, and displayed a greater wish to please, than was manifested by the monarch in this instance. All those who were present at this interview, could not sufficiently express their admiration on beholding a king who, with so many qualities calculated to make himself feared, never employed any but those that would inspire love.

The duke of Guise, penetrated by gratitude, succeeded so well in convincing Henry that his respect and attachment would continue inviolable, that the king from that period blotted from his recollection all that another might have been led to apprehend from the representative of a house, which had so recently made monarchs tremble, admitting him to be a participator in all

his pleasurable parties, and allowing him the most friendly intercourse.

A few days after, the duchess entering the royal apartment at the moment when her son presented a napkin to the king, in order to partake of a slight repast, she exclaimed with a vivacity originating in the heart, that if ever the duke should fail in his duty, she would disinherit and deny him for her son; upon which Henry, rising from his seat, flew to embrace her, saying according to Sully; "*That for his own part he entertained towards the duke and all his family, the tender sentiments of an affectionate father.*".

Henry received the worthy prize of so much generosity, by firmly attaching to himself an illustrious house, praiseworthy and dangerous on account of its alliances, wealth, credit, and even its former audacity. In the sequel, Henry had no subjects more faithful and affectionate than Mayenne and the duke of Guise; the latter of whom, in particular, afterwards rendered the king and the state most important services.

CHAPTER XIV.

Henry is desirous of uniting his sister Catherine of Navarre in marriage with the duke de Montpensier.—Description of Gabrielle d'Etrees' countenance.—Chiverny the chancellor enamoured of the fair Gabrielle.—The duke of Bellegarde the favoured lover of Gabrielle. — Narrow escape of Bellegarde and his mistress.—Melancholy fate of the lord de Givry, enamoured of mademoiselle de Guise.—Bellegarde beloved of the princess de Guise, equally with the duchess her mother.—Double intrigue carried on by Bellegarde.—The duchess of Guise and her daughter visit Henry's court at Mantes.—Rivalry of madame Gabrielle, and the princess de Guise.—Gabrielle manifests her chagrin to Bellegarde. —Influence of love in forwarding Henry's views with the duke of Guise.—Political manœuvres of Gabrielle.—Henry's letter to his mistress on the eve of his embracing the catholic persuasion.—Gabrielle brought to bed of Cæsar afterwards duke de Vendome.

We shall now digress from the belligerent and political topics of Henry's life, and resume the subject of his amours and those of his court, which constituted such a prominent feature of his illustrious reign.

Previous to the king's attachment to the fair Gabrielle, he had made proposals to queen Margaret his wife, in order to procure her consent to a dissolution of their marriage upon certain con-

ditions, to which the princess did not oppose any particular objections. Henry, however, was himself the first to raise obstacles and retard the conclusion of the treaty, because his passion for Gabrielle was so violent, that he dreaded being at liberty, lest his subjects should press him to a fresh union; a step he would willingly have acquiesced in, provided the object had been his mistress, which could not however be accomplished, as she was already married.

However, the king, being very anxious that a male branch of his house should succeed him, had the idea of a union for his sister Catherine of Navarre. That princess had attained the age of forty, and was more agreeable than handsome; she was fond of literature, and much better informed than the generality of her sex. Count de Soissons had been attached to her, as we have previously observed; and it has been stated that proposals were even made to him on the subject; but the king having ascertained that the count secretly coalesced with his enemies, the union was postponed; when Soissons, unwilling to endure such delays, had recourse to the interposition of the countess of Guiche, who very nearly accomplished the marriage, unknown to the king, being thereto instigated from motives of revenge.

In order that he might not again be subject to such an attempt, Henry invited his sister to court, and went to receive her on the banks of the Loire, where he introduced her to the duke

de Montpensier, whom he had selected for her husband. Catherine received him with marked indifference, either owing to his person being disagreeable to her, or that her heart was pre-engaged to the count de Soissons. The princess then proceeded to Dieppe, where she was introduced to madame Gabrielle, that beauty being so called after her marriage had taken place with Liancourt. Catherine found her very lovely, and she is thus described in the *Prosopographie of Anthony du Verdier*, who had frequently seen her. "Her face," says our author, "was rather long, and her look disdainful; but her complexion and skin were of the most dazzling lustre, the white being mingled with a natural vermilion tint, which nothing could surpass; glossy and transparent as a pearl; in short, it appeared pure as the limpid stream, and possessed *the freshness of an egg which has just been laid.*" It required, however, all the courage of Gabrielle to support for a time the haughtiness with which the princess treated her; when, being at length unable to endure such conduct, she supplicated the monarch to separate them. Henry, anxious to content his mistress, without disobliging his sister, left the latter at Dieppe, making Gabrielle the companion of all the journeys he was compelled to undertake.

Madame Gabrielle, never separated from the king, profited so well by the advice of her aunt the marchioness de Sourdis (afterwards mistress of the chancellor Chiverny) that she became well

acquainted with the politics of the times, and displayed so much penetration and judgment in the most delicate and important affairs, as to procure for herself a seat in the council. For this, Gabrielle was in a great measure indebted to the interference of the chancellor, who felt enamoured of that lady, to whom he confessed his passion; so true is it, that nothing proves more powerful than a monarch's example. The king, who felt anxious that every one should be as much in love as himself, was by no means displeased that so grave a personage should become the slave of a similar passion; neither was he pained on the subject, being convinced that the chancellor would in justice allow that his personal attractions were not sufficiently powerful to engage madame Gabrielle's affections. Indeed, the chancellor felt this, and therefore contented himself with becoming necessary to his enslaver, by procuring her the means of satisfying the ambitious views she entertained.

As no felicity is durable, and the most exquisite pleasures are embittered by pain, the joy of madame Gabrielle was suddenly interrupted by the news of her mother's death, who was massacred by the populace of Issoire in Auvergne, where a mutiny had taken place against the marquis d'Allegre, with whom she lived in a state of open adultery, as before mentioned.

Madame Gabrielle was, however, too well versed in pleasures not to know how to moderate the excess of grief, which the death of a parent is

calculated to inspire; and she in consequence sought consolation with the duke de Bellegarde, whom she still loved, and kept up a secret correspondence without the king's being aware of her infidelity. He certainly entertained suspicions, but his mistress was so prodigal in her caresses and protestations of fidelity, that she dissipated all surmises from his mind. Notwithstanding these precautions, however, a discovery was on the point of taking place, the facts being as follow: Henry wrote to Gabrielle, desiring that she would join him, with which the fair acquiesced; when some business of importance suddenly struck the monarch, and he therefore set off at an early hour in the morning, leaving his mistress in bed, who pleaded indisposition. Bellegarde, to answer his own purposes, spread the report that Henry was on his route to Mantes, upon whose departure La Rousse, the confidant of Gabrielle, of whom Sully gives such an unfavourable description, introduced Bellegarde into his mistress's private study, of which he alone had the key, and then conducted him to Gabrielle's apartment. Scarcely had the lovers exchanged a few tender caresses, than the king, having found some obstacles to the execution of his designs, returned, and thus placed his mistress and the duke in a very perilous predicament. Upon the first alarm, La Rousse, who was always fertile in expedients, hurried Bellegarde into the study, which was so situated, that the window looked out upon a garden. No sooner had the

monarch entered, than he desired to have some sweetmeats; and as he knew that La Rousse kept them in the study, he demanded the key; which the artful confidant pretended to have mislaid, in order to give the duke time to escape; and while the monarch raged against the attendant, madame Gabrielle solicited that he would moderate his anger, as the noise he made encreased the pain she endured in her head. Henry at length felt his suspicions awakened, and in consequence his fury knew no bounds, when Bellegarde, who overheard every thing, being convinced that in case of a discovery he was irretrievably lost, opened the window and jumped down into the garden; where, notwithstanding the height, he alighted without sustaining the slightest injury. La Rousse, who kept sentry, was no sooner aware of his having quitted the study, than he returned apparently out of breath, and, uttering many excuses, unlocked the door, and presented the king with what he had required.

Henry, astonished at finding nobody in the closet, could scarcely credit his senses, believing that Bellegarde possessed the power of rendering himself invisible. Gabrielle, who had continued mute from apprehension, became emboldened on witnessing Henry's astonishment, and then began to upbraid him in the most bitter terms, concluding thus, while her delivery was impeded by sighs and sobs: "I am well aware, Sire, that your love is on the wane; spare yourself the

pain of seeking to create a quarrel, which will enable you to abandon me. I am resolved to anticipate you, and to join my husband; it is necessary that confidence should be reciprocal in affection; and since you do not love me sufficiently to be convinced of my fidelity, I ought at least to prove myself generous enough to tranquillize your mind by a speedy retreat."

"You do me great injustice, my beloved child," answered the king: "are you not aware that a little jealousy is the certain concomitant of love the most pure and violent? If I esteemed and cherished you less, I should not be so afraid of losing you; however, since my conduct offends, I promise never more to be jealous. I deserve all your anger, my beloved; but certainly I am not unworthy of grace, since I here confess my fault at your feet."

Gabrielle, then casting one of her languishing and eloquent glances towards the monarch, which was more emphatic than words, thus sealed his forgiveness; and so fearful was the prince lest she should put her threat into execution, that a considerable period elapsed ere he again testified any marks of suspicion.

The court was thus circumstanced when the duchess of Guise, who had remained at Paris with the chiefs of the League, requested a passport, being desirous of repairing to one of her estates in the country; which was not only granted in the handsomest manner, but the princess was further invited to visit Mantes,

where Henry then resided. This journey was particularly gratifying to the duchess's daughter, who was thereby enabled to satisfy the two opposite sentiments of love and hatred, as she was enamoured of Bellegarde, and detested madame Gabrielle, by whom she knew he was beloved. In consequence of this, she was anxious to behold the one, in order to rivet his affection, and the other, to find means of gratifying her vengeance.

In the course of the truces that took place during the siege of Paris, the gallant officers of the royal army repaired to the borders of the moat, in order to converse with the ladies, who went for that purpose to the ramparts of the city. Anne d'Anglure, lord of Givry, who had been in a great measure brought up with mademoiselle de Guise, was passionately in love with her, and took every opportunity of manifesting the ardour of his affection. That lady, however, did not requite his flame, aspiring to a much higher alliance, as we shall presently have cause to explain. She had, notwithstanding, given Givry cause to hope, and it has been said by some writers that she even promised him marriage. Givry, allowed to be the best formed and the most accomplished cavalier at court, as well for bravery and acquirements in the *Belles Lettre* as for his gallantry, was so affected at the infidelity of his mistress, that he yielded himself up to despair, and voluntarily sought a glorious death, which would at once terminate his miseries with

his existence: a melancholy fate he experienced at the siege of Laon, where he fell, after performing prodigies of valour.

The indifference manifested by mademoiselle de Guise for Givry originated in the pretensions she entertained upon the heart of the king, who had requested her portrait, and seemed desirous of espousing her, provided the alliance would conduce to place the chiefs of the League under his authority. Such a magnificent prospect tended to augment the inherent pride in a bosom naturally prone to haughtiness, and led her to despise every thing that did not approximate to the throne; however, a short period completely humbled this domineering spirit. A friend of Bellegarde having one day solicited him to repair to the spot appointed for holding conversations with the fair sex, he was conducted thither, as it were, in opposition to his inclination, when he beheld mademoiselle de Guise, who appeared so enchanting in his eyes, that his heart owned the supremacy of her fascinations. The princess, who was no novice in affairs of gallantry, felt a malignant gratification on perceiving the effect produced by her beauty; and as in such cases we always construe to our own advantage whatsoever flatters our vanity, she retired from the *rendezvous*, secretly glorying in the conquest she had effected. Subsequent to this, mademoiselle de Guise having occasion to see the duke, on examining his person found it completely to her taste, and that he was in every

respect worthy of being beloved; insomuch so that she found it would not be difficult to console herself for the loss of that grandeur she had been led to hope for, provided she could pass the residue of her life with a man for whom she already entertained such tender sentiments.

Reports had been spread that Bellegarde took an active part in the assassination of the duke of Guise at Blois; and, in consequence, the duchess, who had heard these insinuations, looked upon Bellegarde as a man she ought to hate, and conducted herself accordingly; but she found it impossible to render her heart obedient to the sentiments of her mind. The struggle was between love and duty, but the latter was not predominant: in vain did she seek to rouse the feelings of resentment, and recall the memory of her deceased lord; she felt, to her confusion, that she entertained far different sentiments towards the living; and in consequence the mother and the daughter could not refrain from loving an individual who, upon many accounts, ought to have been odious to them. Mademoiselle de Guise, aware of the feelings of her mother, was soon convinced that she should have to dispute with her for the heart of Bellegarde, which made her resolve to combat against the dawning passion, or at least to conceal it; and if she had reasons to be wary in her conduct, Bellegarde had equal cause to watch over his own. He was too wise to abandon a reality for what was uncertain, and therefore resolved to stifle the feelings he

had imbibed for mademoiselle de Guise, or, at all events, to conduct himself with mystery, fearful lest madame Gabrielle, who supported his pretensions at court, should employ all her credit to effect his ruin, in case she became aware of his infidelity.

Bellegarde was fully conscious of the reports to his disadvantage, which had gained the ears of the duchess of Guise and her daughter, relating to the duke's assassination; and as he could not suffer the thought of being regarded an accomplice in the father's death, although he no longer wished to inspire her with love, he nevertheless instigated his friends, requesting them to declare upon his part that he was altogether innocent of the duke's murder. As we are uniformly ready in believing that which we ardently wish, his excuses were so favourably received, that the duchess, not content with stating to her informants that she gave no credit to those calumnies, even ordered her daughter never in future to accuse Bellegarde as one of the authors of her father's assassination. Mademoiselle de Guise was as easily persuaded as her parent; and in consequence it became no difficult task for her to obey a command so accordant with her own wishes. In short, they both found from experience that there is no crime, however heinous, which the empire of love will not expiate.

Bellegarde was not a little embarrassed on witnessing the marked attentions of the duchess; he knew not what measures to adopt, and was

equally the sport of hopes and fears. When he called to mind the manner in which mademoiselle de Guise had returned his impassioned glances by looks no less ardent, he concluded that he might make himself beloved; on the other hand, he considered it would be the height of ingratitude to prove faithless to a person who sacrificed for his passion a powerful monarch, and he was, therefore, at a loss how to proceed. Reason, ambition, and glory led him to condemn his inconstancy; and yet he could not consent to stifle a passion which afforded him such brilliant prospects; so that, after weighing the matter maturely, he determined to break neither with one nor the other, firmly resolved to serve both at the same time. Thus circumstanced, it became essential for him to seek every means of pleasing the duchess of Guise; for, like an experienced courtier, he found it necessary to profit by the attachment with which he had inspired the daughter. He succeeded admirably in both cases, frequently remitting letters to the duchess and mademoiselle de Guise, from whom he uniformly received the most flattering answers.

The duke of Guise having at that period escaped from the castle of Tours, Bellegarde, who was intimately acquainted with him, despatched a trumpeter to compliment the prince upon the occasion, at the same time confiding two letters to his care for the princesses. The messenger, who was an experienced agent, fulfilled his mission so well that he conveyed the letter intended

for mademoiselle de Guise so adroitly that she received it without having been noticed by any one. Being very closely watched, she had no means of conversing, and therefore contented herself by making known the pleasurable sentiments she felt through the medium of signs, which were faithfully detailed to the overjoyed Bellegarde on the return of his emissary.

Such was the nature of affairs between the parties in question when the duchess of Guise sent to demand the passport previously adverted to. Bellegarde, on ascertaining that the princesses had set out for Mantes, advised the king to send a messenger to meet them, and obtained for himself that commission. It would be difficult to state what took place during the interview that occurred, as they spoke in private and nothing ever transpired. There is, however, reason to conjecture that the duchess took advantage of that moment to explain her sentiments to Bellegarde, and that mademoiselle de Guise returned with interest the impassioned glances which the duke at intervals directed towards her. The duchess was incessantly extolling the charms of madame Gabrielle; and the more she beheld her, so in proportion did she find her amiable qualities increase. This, however, was not the case with her daughter; for, although internally convinced that she well deserved the encomiums thus bestowed, she could not submit to praise those fascinations which robbed her of a heart on which she had planned great designs. Madame Gabri-

elle, on the other hand, made excellent use of her eyes, which, sometimes directed towards Bellegarde and then upon mademoiselle de Guise, she with infinite difficulty concealed the secret spite that rankled in her soul, on finding the princess possessed of so much beauty. In fine, both rivals, and alike discreet in their conduct, it required the utmost stretch of good breeding to keep them within the bounds of civility, which they reciprocally owed to each other. Mademoiselle de Guise could at length support the struggle no longer, for during the evening, being in the courtly circle, she said to Bellegarde, whom she perceived behind her chair, after having for a time fixed her gaze upon madame Gabrielle, that she did not find her so beautiful as had been reported; but the duke did not dare reply, fearful of being overheard by madame Gabrielle, who was at no great distance.

The king, who was a great adept in love affairs, and fully aware that the duchess of Guise entertained a passion for Bellegarde, concluded at once that the duke only displayed complaisance for the mother, in order to conceal from her the passion he entertained for the daughter. This decision in the mind of Henry was productive of two very good effects as regarded Bellegarde; for it cured the monarch of his jealousy in respect to Gabrielle, whom he adored more than ever, and made him relinquish the design he had had of espousing mademoiselle de Guise. The duke stood in need of both, in order to continue with

safety his intrigues with his two mistresses; and the felicity of Bellegarde would have been complete could he have dispelled with equal facility the jealous surmises of madame Gabrielle, as he had done those of his master; she was, however, too well versed in the intricacies of love not to observe the change, and examine minutely every action of her lover. By this means it was not long ere Gabrielle perceived the attentions manifested by the duke to mademoiselle de Guise; she was gratified that the king yielded to the delusion; but so exasperated at the attachment of Bellegarde, as scarcely to taste that pleasure arising from Henry's credulity, which she would have experienced had her mind been in a state of tranquillity.

If madame Gabrielle possessed a penetrating genius, the princess of Guise was no less discerning. She perceived the anxiety of her rival, and whether it was owing to her joy in being sole possessor of Bellegarde's affections, or that she was vain enough not to be displeased that her charms were to be dreaded, she no longer displayed any caution, and even in the presence of Gabrielle openly testified marks of affection for Bellegarde that were calculated to excite a rival's jealousy to the highest pitch. Being incapable of making an impression on the king, mademoiselle de Guise took delight at least in triumphing over the beauty who had deprived her of so great a conquest; and therefore conceived the reprisal

just, of taking Bellegarde from that female by whom she was deprived of the king.

The duchess of Guise made a very short stay at court, and repaired to the mansion whither she had determined on passing the summer months. As females never give quarter in matters connected with their personal charms, madame Gabrielle could not pardon mademoiselle de Guise for the attempt that had been made on the heart of her lover, and therefore pretended indisposition, which served as an excuse for not taking leave of the duchess and her daughter. The major part of the principal courtiers escorted them to a considerable distance; and it may be conceived that Bellegarde did not fail to be among the number. No sooner, however, had he returned than he waited upon madame Gabrielle, to deliver an account of all that had taken place, when she received him with such an air of coldness that he became extremely uneasy. The princess being no longer present, Gabrielle assumed an empire over his heart; and he was so fearful of losing her from interested motives, that he a thousand times cursed himself for his imprudence and instability. If Bellegarde was wretched, the duchess of Guise was no less so; she could not live out of his presence, and yet it became difficult to behold him with facility so long as the war should continue. She determined, therefore, to remove this obstacle, and in consequence used her arguments with the duke her son, to persuade him to treat with the king. Thus

females prove the thermometers in great affairs, which either rise or fall in proportion as they are instigated by the passion of love. Henry, overjoyed at the opportunity of coming to amicable terms with the house of Guise, which had been the very soul of the League, commissioned Bellegarde to negotiate in the first instance; madame Gabrielle being very dissatisfied with the choice so made by his majesty. In consequence of this she endeavoured to procure his nomination to another post, alleging that the duke was young and without experience; that the employment in question was not fitted for him; that he would not succeed, and that his person would not prove so fascinating with the son as the mother. Bellegarde, who desired nothing so much as again to behold the princess of Guise, employed all his friends to maintain him in the negotiation whereto he had been appointed; and even the duke de Nevers, who at that period occupied the first place at the council-board, spoke to the king on the subject, applauding the election he had made. Little eloquence was required in deciding his majesty in favour of the duke, as he felt convinced that madame Gabrielle only acted from motives of jealousy, and it was on that very account the reasons adduced by his mistress did not coincide with his own taste.

The duke de Bellegarde at length set out upon his journey; but his negotiations were not attended by all the success he had expected. That nobleman, however, was not disheartened;

and being seconded by Nevers and Sully, the business was terminated as we have previously stated.

Bellegarde, having been so instrumental in bringing about an accommodation between the king and the family of the Guises; Madame Gabrielle upon her part endeavoured to effect the same desirable end in regard to Mayenne and the monarch, of which we shall have occasion to speak at a future period, she having proved a very successful agent in the ratification of that treaty. Madame Gabrielle, however, in exerting her good offices, was instigated from personal motives; as in case of success she hoped to make the duke instrumental in procuring her marriage with Henry, and thus gratifying her ambition in ascending the throne of France.

This, however, was not the only political point upon which Gabrielle exerted her influence, as the conversion of the king from Calvinism was principally owing to her arguments and unceasing persuasions; in confirmation of which it may not be amiss to insert the following letter, written by Henry to his mistress on the eve of his abjuration, which we give as nearly as possible to the original document.

"*My heart, I arrived at an early hour yesterday evening, and was importuned, God knows, until the hour of going to bed. We believe the truce will take place this day. In regard to myself, I am at present at Saint-Thomas, a place belonging to the leaguers. I this morning had a conference with the bishops.*

Independent of those I yesterday sent to serve you as an escort, I shall this day forward fifty, who are well worth as many cuirassiers. The hope I entertain of beholding you to-morrow, arrests my pen from prolonging this communication. It will be next Sunday, that I shall venture on the perilous leap" (alluding to the ceremony of his abjuration at Saint-Denis.) "*Even now while I am writing to you, I am importuned by an hundred different applicants, who make me hate Saint-Denis, as much as you do Mantes. Good day, my heart; come to-morrow betimes; for it already seems to me that a year has transpired since I saw you. I kiss a thousand times the beautiful hands of my angel, and the lips of my dear mistress. This 23d of July.*"

We will now resume the regular thread of our narrative, by stating that the king left Mantes to commence the siege of Laon, and some days after his departure, madame Gabrielle was brought to bed of Cæsar, who bore the title of Monsieur, and was afterwards created duke de Vendome. Henry was excessively gratified at this event; and, in consequence, created Gabrielle marchioness de Monçeau, and although it was impossible he could love her more ardently, he nevertheless redoubled his attentions, and testified more respect in regard to her, a sentiment he was desirous should be manifested by every one at court.

The marchioness, for by that title we shall henceforth speak of the beautiful Gabrielle, supported by several great noblemen of the court, had so much influence as to prompt the king to

declare war against Spain, in the hope of conquering Franche Comté for her son; and the monarch, upon his return to Paris in order to prepare for hostilities, narrowly escaped the assassination, of which we shall have occasion to speak in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

Sanguinary proceeding of D'Aumont on taking Codron. —Generous conduct of an English soldier.—Discontents manifested by the Calvinists.—Châtel's attempt to assassinate the king.—The jesuits expelled from France.—Declaration of war with Spain.—Duplicity of count de Soissons. —Henry's gallant conduct at the battle of Fontaine Française.—Destitute situation of the duke de Mayenne.—The king receives absolution from the pope.—Truce with the duke d'Epernon.—Deaths of marshal D'Aumont and Henry d'Orleans duke de Longueville.—Defeat of the royalists at Dourlens.—Deaths of Villars and the duke de Nevers.—Henry pursues measures to rear up the prince of Condé in the catholic belief.—Treaties with the dukes de Mayenne, Nemours, and marshal Joyeuse.— Henry's interview and reconciliation with Mayenne.—Surrender of Marseilles to the duke of Guise.—Treaty with the duke d'Epernon.—Henry applies to queen Elizabeth for succours.—Calais surrendered to the Spaniards.— Wretched state of Henry's finances.—Character of Sully. —Assembly of the notables at Rouen.—Discontents of the Huguenots.— Capture of Amiens by the Spaniards.— Sully's plan of finance.—Siege of Amiens by the king.— Surrender of that city to Henry.—Capitulation of the duke de Mercœur.—Ratification of the edict of Nantes.— Peace concluded at Vervins.

ALTHOUGH Henry began to taste the fruits of that tranquillity he had so long sought to acquire, several rebellious spirits nevertheless resisted the

royal authority. The duke d'Epernon, although neither a leaguer, nor an ally of Spain, tyrannized in Provence, of which he was governor, without the king's being in a state to recall him; while the duke de Mayenne, humiliated by the Spaniards whom he hated, uniformly rejected the liberal overtures made to him by his sovereign. The League still maintained itself in Brittany, where the ambitious duke of Mercœur had introduced the Spanish forces, in the hope of creating it into an independent principality for himself. This nobleman maintained his post with dauntless courage, notwithstanding the urgent representations of his sister, the virtuous Louisa of Lorraine, dowager queen of France, who strenuously solicited him to treat with the king. Marshal D'Aumont with a small army commanded the royalists in that province, and he laid siege to the fortress of Codron, defended by a Spanish garrison. It is with painful feelings we are compelled to quote Mezeray, who states, that the marshal, so renowned for his integrity and unalterable faith to his king, carried away by excess of zeal for his master, gave his troops upon this occasion a sanguinary order, as repugnant to honour as it was disgusting to humanity. Previously to his undertaking the siege, D'Aumont commanded his troops, after a deliberation in the military council, to grant no quarter to the Spaniards on pain of death, even in case they threw down their arms, and surrendered themselves up prisoners! He at the same time promised that

no one exception should be made to this law, every Spaniard being doomed to slaughter, whether wounded, disarmed, or supplicating for his life!

This inhuman order issued by the marshal was, however, only executed by some sanguinary cut-throats, unworthy of bearing the military insignia; and the command gave rise to an act of generosity, which well deserves being recorded in history. An English soldier saved the life of a Spaniard, conducted him to safe quarters after the battle, kept him concealed, and provided for his necessities out of his own pay. D'Aumont, advertised of the fact, ordered the Englishman to his presence; who acknowledged every thing; adding, that he would joyfully suffer death, provided the safety of the Spaniard was ensured; upon which, the marshal demanding the cause of the lively interest manifested upon his part, the soldier with firmness replied: "It is because under similar circumstances he rescued me from death, and gratitude therefore exacted at my hands all that I have undertaken for his safety." The marshal, sensibly touched by this noble conduct, spared the lives of both, and loaded the English soldier with presents; a generosity the more praiseworthy, since, in according it, he passed a tacit condemnation on his own proceedings. The fortress of Codron was carried by assault; on which occasion Praxada, the Spanish officer defending it, behaved with the greatest courage, and was ultimately killed

in the breach. The duke de Mercœur continued master of the rest of Brittany, although most of the towns yielded to the royal authority. In the midst of his satisfaction, Henry became a prey to very great disquietudes; not owing to Mayenne, the League, or the Spaniards; but he ascertained, from the irregular conduct of many nobles of his party, that he was surrounded by a crowd of discontented individuals, and that the Huguenots, in particular, strove to create for him fresh embarrassments. They convened general assemblies to deliberate on their private affairs; and always anxious to continue isolated in the state, were neither citizens, nor faithful and obedient subjects. Deputies were sent by them to the king, demanding a separate chamber of assembly, and that a protector of their party should be nominated. Henry gave for answer, that he would permit no innovations; that they should only have the edict ratified by Henry the Third in 1577, which was peculiarly favourable to the Calvinist party. "I am perfectly aware," added the king, "that some have asserted the deceased monarch must have been an heretic to sanction an edict so advantageous to the protestants; but the first who shall from henceforth dare to use similar language, I will instantly bring to trial. The edict in question is reasonable, I will maintain and grant nothing further. In respect to a leader, I wish it to be known, that there is no other protector in France save myself; and the

public may rest assured, that I would proceed with my fortune and my life against any one who should dare assume such a title." The protestants, however, alleging that Henry the Third had yielded up places of surety to their party, the king replied: "*The situation of affairs at that period caused my predecessor to fear, although he did not love you; as for myself, I love you, but I fear you not.*" This firmness maintained due respect, which was accomplishing a great deal; but the spirit of rebellion, and suspicions, still remained unabated. Notwithstanding these importunities which Henry experienced from his Huguenot subjects, he nevertheless maintained his temper, and even at times indulged himself at the expense of the reformers. The protestant clergymen of Aunis and Xanitonge, having demanded the assignment of certain lands belonging to the king in those territories, in liquidation of their salaries, Henry made answer: "In regard to that, I refer you to madame my sister; since your kingdom is in want of a male inheritor." Princess Catherine was a most determined Calvinist, and a great protector of the supporters of that faith.

Among the Huguenots, there were many who knew the king's uprightness, and were sincerely devoted to him; from whom the monarch became acquainted with the sentiments of their colleagues. The Calvinists were above all apprehensive, that as Henry had embraced the catholic faith, he might make peace with Spain, and

coalesce with that power for the purpose of destroying their sect. It was in consequence of this, that in all the royal councils, they demanded a declaration of war against Spain, alleging, that the Spanish court had uniformly carried on hostilities by sending succours to maintain the League. The king hesitated respecting the measures he ought to pursue: if he ratified peace, the League must instantly become annihilated; but if, on the other hand, he declared war, independent of the advantages he hoped to derive from thence, he gave employment to the factious and turbulent spirits, calmed their apprehensions, and preserved the kingdom from the most dangerous revolts, as the League had become nothing more than a phantom. Henry was less apprehensive of belligerent enterprises, than a forced repose of the Calvinists, who thirsted for war, and with whom the enjoyment of life consisted in a succession of violent operations. The king, during the month of December, being on the frontiers of Picardy, held various councils; at which, opinions were divided on the subject of warfare, when the monarch, biassed only by the interests of his people and humanity, adopted pacific resolutions. Terms were in consequence proposed to the archduke Ernest; but the latter replied to these overtures by making such unreasonable demands, that Henry was compelled to decide upon war; and he repaired to Paris on the 27th of December, in order to accelerate the preparations: and on the above day, a vile assas-

sin conceived the detestable idea of depriving France of fifteen years of prosperity and happiness.

The king alighted at the hotel de Schomberg, in which Gabrielle, then marchioness of Monçeau, resided, where he found several noblemen who were paying their court to that cherished beauty. As the monarch assumed no etiquette when at the residence of his mistress, he permitted a young girl named Mathurine to appear in his presence, who amused him with her youthful sallies in the apartment where he remained, and of which the door continued partly open. De Bury states in a note, vol. ii. p. 250, extracted from the Confession of Sancy, that Mathurine was a girl who feigned to be silly, and was sometimes permitted to shew off her antics before the king, being attached to the retinue of the court, and filling the employ of those fools, or buffoons, who formerly attended on princes for their amusement.

Henry, observing Montigny, who addressed him with a profound inclination of the body, advanced towards him; and, while in the act of stooping to raise and embrace that officer, he received a blow from a knife, which broke one of his teeth, and cut his upper lip on the right side. Feeling himself thus assailed, he turned his head, when his regard falling upon Mathurine, he cried out: "*The devil take the silly wench! she has wounded me.*" The girl, however, denying the fact, proceeded to give proofs that she was not

so silly as she pretended to appear; for, springing with alacrity to the door, she closed the same, and vowed that she would rather suffer death than permit any individual to quit the chamber. Rosny, who was present, on viewing the king's face covered with blood, thought that Henry had been struck in the throat, and approached his master more dead than alive; upon which, the prince with a smiling and tranquil countenance, dispelled the general apprehension. The courtiers immediately began to scrutinize the visages of all present, many of whom were strangers; and among the crowd was a young man pale and trembling, who had dropped the bloody dagger, which the count de Soissons (says De Thou in book the 3d) perceiving by the glare of the torches, instantly seized him, exclaiming, "Vile miscreant, it must be either you or I who have wounded the king." The assassin at first excused himself, by stammering out a few words; but soon after, forgetting his precaution, made an avowal of every thing.

The above is the account as handed down in L'Etoile; whereas a manuscript in the royal library, vol. 9033, details the event in the following manner. The king, feeling himself struck, addressed his speech either to Francis de la Magdelaine de Ragny, or Francis de la Grange de Montigny, exclaiming, "*Ah cousin, you have wounded me!*" when the latter of those gentlemen, throwing himself at the king's feet, answered: "God forbid, Sire, that I should

entertain a thought of touching, or wounding your majesty! I have no instrument about me but my sword, which is at my side."

This monster, named John Châtel, son of a cloth merchant at Paris, was forthwith committed to the custody of the lieutenant of the provost, who conducted him in safety to prison.

The report of this attempted assassination spread with rapidity throughout Paris, and created universal consternation; but when it was understood that the wound was not dangerous, joy was manifested in every direction; the populace, of its own accord, prompted by sentiments of pious gratitude, flocked to the churches to offer up thanks to the Divinity for having preserved the monarch, who, in order to give ocular demonstration of his personal safety, proceeded through the principal streets, and in the evening attended Notre Dame, where *Te Deum* and an act of grace were solemnized. By the king's orders couriers were despatched into the provinces, to make known the event; and Henry wrote several letters with his own hand to the governors of provinces.

John Châtel was interrogated on the following day by Lugoly, lieutenant of the provost, in Fort Leveque, when he confessed the having long meditated the deed, and that, if he had not then attempted it, he should have put it in practice at some other time, conceiving it of utility to religion: that he had deliberated on the act for eight days, and that about eleven in the morning

he had formed the resolution of attempting the assassination; for which purpose he had possessed himself of a knife out of his father's kitchen. Being questioned as to the seminary in which he had received his education, he stated at the Jesuits', where he had continued for three years under the tuition of John Gueret and Guignard; that he had seen the said father on the Friday and Saturday preceding, having been conducted thither by Peter Châtel, his father, on an affair of conscience, as he despaired of God's mercy, on account of the sins he had committed, which he had confessed several times. That in order to expiate his crimes he conceived it necessary to perform some signal act, and had consulted his father concerning his imagining and being anxious to commit the murder, who had told him that such a deed would be highly criminal.

The second interrogatory took place at the Conciergerie, whither Châtel had been transferred by order of the parliament, which was delegated to decide on matters of high treason; when his replies were nearly the same; in addition to which he in the most solemn manner exculpated Gueret and Guignard from having been in any respect accessories to the crime he had sought to perpetrate; the prisoner, according to the *Journal de Henry IV.*, maintaining that the act was solely his own, that he had been instigated thereto by no one, that he conceived it was in the sacred cause of his religion, of which *Henry de Bourbon,* for it was by that name he designated

the king, was an enemy, and without the pale of the church, as he had not received the pope's absolution.

The parliament ordered that a strict search should be made throughout the Jesuits' college of Clermont; when there were found in the possession of John Guignard many libellous publications against Henry the Third and the reigning monarch; in consequence of which he was conducted, with some others of the fraternity, to the prison of the Conciergerie. As a report was in consequence spread that the jesuits were the instigators of this deed, the populace proceeded to lay siege to the college, and would have massacred all the inmates if the king had not despatched his guards to restrain the frenzy of the multitude. The jesuits, however, were not the only persons accused of this affair, the Huguenots loudly proclaiming that the act originated with the leaguers, who continued very numerous in the capital. The Calvinists, recalling melancholy facts to their recollections, were upon the point of seizing this opportunity to avenge themselves by a slaughter of the catholics; but Henry by his wisdom and vigilance, combined with the salutary orders which he issued, prevented this sanguinary reprisal, as no doubt a massacre similar to that of Saint Bartholomew was intended.

After the various interrogatories had been gone through, John Châtel was convicted by the parliament, which passed the following sentence on the 29th of December, that was put into effect

on the same day in the *Place de Grève:* that the assassin should perform the act of contrition; that his right hand, holding the knife with which he had attempted the murder, should be struck off; after which his flesh should be tortured with red-hot pincers, his body torn in pieces by four horses, then burned, and the ashes scattered to the winds.

Peter Châtel the father was banished the kingdom for ever; his mother and sisters obtained their liberty on consideration that they would quit Paris and not return before the expiration of two years. Their house was demolished, and the price of the materials employed to erect upon the same spot a quadrangular pyramid, whereon was engraved the parliamentary edict passed on this occasion, together with various inscriptions in honour of the king.

Father Gueret, professor of philosophy and tutor of John Châtel, was banished the French territory for nine years; and father Guignard, in consequence of the libels found in his possession, was condemned to be hanged on the 7th of January, 1595. The latter protested his innocence, solemnly declaring that he had never had any concern in composing the libels found in his apartments; these asseverations, however, were productive of no beneficial effect to the accused, who was led to the entrance of the cathedral of Notre Dame to read his recantation. When commanded to ask pardon of God, the king, and justice, he replied that he demanded forgiveness

of the Almighty, because all men were sinners; but, not having offended the king, he had no forgiveness to ask at his hands. He was then conducted to the *Place de Grève*, where he suffered death with great fortitude, after having exhorted the public to the fear of God and obedience to the king, for whom he even pronounced a prayer aloud.

Adverting to the above subject, the *Mémoire de l'Etoile* says, we cannot help remarking that under such a reign this sentence was by far too rigorous, as, instead of death, the condemnation to perpetual banishment would have been sufficient. The resigned and edifying conduct of this unfortunate ecclesiastic cast an odious stain of injustice upon his condemnation, which bore no analogy to the general acts that characterized Henry's reign. This execution was speedily followed by an act of parliament, banishing the jesuits from the French territory, who quitted Paris on the 8th of January, 1595; upon which the fraternity retired to Lorraine.

At the commencement of this year Henry published a manifesto containing a declaration of war against Spain; wherein the Spanish monarch was reproached with having been one of the principal causes of all the troubles that had constantly agitated France since the reign of Francis the Second; with forming and supporting the rebellion of the League and the horrors of civil war; with furnishing supplies of men and money to the factious, and committing every species of hostility

against the faithful subjects of the king. In consequence of these weighty causes for complaint, Henry declared war against Philip and his subjects, commanding the French to follow up hostilities with unremitting severity. In answer to this manifesto, the deceitful Philip issued a proclamation, abounding with the most outrageous perfidy and insult; breathing pretended pacific intentions; asserting that his wish was to continue on amicable terms with the French crown, and protect the confederacy formed by himself with the catholics of that kingdom, even such as should have abandoned the party, provided they rejoined his standard within two months; but that he declared himself an enemy of the prince of Bearn; protesting, moreover, that he had no other interest in view than the preservation of the catholic faith and the realm of France in a firm state of peace.

Henry, in consequence, vigorously pursued hostile preparations against the Spaniards and Mayenne; and, in order to commence operations and ensure success, he, with his accustomed ability, disposed of the forces throughout the several provinces, and repaired in person to Burgundy. Dijon had revolted against Mayenne, but the inhabitants were not in sufficient strength to drive out the rebels, and the king marched to their aid. Previously to setting forward, he provided for the internal affairs of his state, establishing a council for the finances and administration of the kingdom. The count de Soissons was

very anxious to be elected chief of that assembly, and insinuated his wishes to the king, who pretended not to understand him; for, as he placed little dependence on his attachment and fidelity, the monarch was resolved not to grant him such a proof of his confidence. The king, therefore named the prince de Conti to that post, who during his absence, was also to assume the functions of governor of Paris. Henry stated to the count de Soissons, that, knowing his inclinations and talents were wholly absorbed by war, he was desirous of having him near his person during the campaign that was on the eve of commencing. The count, ill dissembling his disappointment, made Henry experience all the contrarieties resulting from his caprice; which he supported with unsubdued patience; and the more particularly so, as the count followed him with regret in order to procure an order to retire and fall under the king's disgrace; who, notwithstanding, constantly took delight in wearying out his ill humours. On arriving at Troyes, where Henry for the first time made his entry, he learned that the constable of Castille, accompanied by Mayenne, was in Franche Comté at the head of a Spanish army, intending to march into Burgundy to convey succours to the castles of Dijon and Talan. Henry, in consequence, ordered up the two bodies of troops commanded by the constable Montmorency and marshal Biron; when the count de Soissons pretended, in opposition to common sense, that, as master of the royal household, he

had a right to assume the chief command during the absence of his majesty. He was perfectly aware of the folly of such a claim; but, seeking for a pretext to abandon the king, he took advantage of that plea with determined obstinacy. Henry, to make him abandon such pretensions, solicited, nay supplicated the count *as he might have done his son or his brother* (for such were the precise terms used by the monarch in explaining the transaction to Rosny); all, however, proved of no utility; the count left him with feigned discontent, engaging the major part of the officers and men at arms under his orders to follow his example. Such were the disappointments to which the greatest and best of monarchs was subjected; yet ingratitude, defections, and rebellious movements, could never sour his character, or change the sweetness, patience, and generosity of his nature. The king proceeded with all alacrity to assist Dijon and Talan; at the former place visiting the fortifications without alighting from his horse, and ordering fresh intrenchments. He then, according to custom, marched with part of his troops to meet the enemy, directing them to proceed to Lux and Fontaine Française, whither he proceeded before them. The king, conceiving that it would prove very advantageous should he be able to come up with his opponents while occupied in traversing the Saône, set forward to encounter them, having with him only three hundred horse, one half of whom were arquebusiers. Thus escorted, Henry proceeded to Vigenne,

near the small town of Sainte-Seine; from which place he forwarded the count Mirebeau with sixty horse to reconnoitre, giving a similar commission to baron d'Aussonville; while he himself passed the river Vigenne with about one hundred and twenty cavalry, for the sole purpose of examining the nature of the ground upon which it was probable he should be obliged to come to action. Henry had not advanced a league when he beheld Mirebeau making towards him in disorder, who instantly informed his master that he had been charged by nearly four hundred horse, which prevented his reconnoitring the enemy; immediately after which Biron coming up, offered to proceed and acquire more positive news; when Mirebeau and baron Lux followed him. At a thousand paces distant he found an advanced guard of sixty horse posted on a hill, which he charged and dispersed; and then discerned the whole Spanish army advancing in order for battle, while four hundred horse, at some distance from the main body, were in pursuit of an hundred and fifty French cavalry, being the forces of D'Aussonville, which the king had despatched at the same time as Mirebeau, but in a different direction. D'Aussonville in his flight brought the whole storm of his pursuers on Biron, who was attacked by the enemy right and left; when De Lux was very roughly handled, and even unhorsed. Biron, on the contrary, having had the advantage, flew to his assistance, and re-established order; but he was afterwards so fu-

riously assailed by the enemy's squadrons united, that he found it necessary to retreat. This movement, however, was speedily converted into an absolute flight, as soon as the enemies began the pursuit. At this juncture Biron arrived in sight of Henry, who in the first instance sent an hundred horse to support him; nothing, however, is more difficult than to stop a flying troop, particularly when their opponents are close in the rear; and in consequence the reinforcement despatched, following the example of those they intended to succour, returned towards the king at full speed. At this distressing juncture it was proposed to the king that he should mount a famous Turkish horse which was kept in readiness, and seek for safety in flight; to which he replied, "*I have no need of advice; I want assistance. There is more danger in flight than in pursuing.*" Henry, finding that his only resource was centred in himself, galloped up to the flying forces without covering himself with his helmet, and exposed his person to encounter the victorious squadrons, consisting of more than eight hundred, while he had no more than three hundred horse. The monarch then calling to his officers by name, exclaimed: "*Behold me, gentlemen; follow my example;*" upon which he rushed amidst the Spaniards, totally unmindful of his own person. Amidst this activity, the heat of action, and general confusion, he contemplated every thing with *sang-froid;* when, perceiving that an officer, named Lacurée, who fought without armour, was

not aware that one of the enemy had levelled his lance to pierce him, cried out, "*Take care of yourself, Lacurée*;" upon which the latter suddenly turning round, killed his opponent on the spot.—(Manuscript in the Royal Library at Paris, vol. 8929.)

The king succeeded in rallying his men, and formed two corps, placing himself at the head of fifty horse; with which he returned to the charge on one side, while Trimouille, by his order, did the same in another direction with a similar number, and proved himself worthy of seconding such a commander. Had not this intrepid conduct been pursued, the whole three hundred horse being engaged on the opposite side of a river, must have been cut to pieces by the victorious pursuers. Henry, forcing a passage for his soldiers, mingled bareheaded in the midst of six squadrons of the enemy, who were obliged to give way; as if his uncovered visage affrighted the adversaries, who were unable to withstand his looks. In this terrible conflict captain Mainville uniformly rode close to the king; preserving a loaded pistol charged with two steel bullets, in order to fire at the first Spaniard who should approach the royal person; of which he made such signal use, that he split the head of one of the enemy who advanced too near the king, the balls afterwards whistling close to the monarch's ear; who, says Mathieu the historian, never after spoke of a pistol without calling to mind the discharge in question, observing, that he had never witnessed such a

dreadful blow. Biron, taking advantage of the enemy's surprise and disorder, collected the rest of the run-away troops, and returned with 120 horse to the support of Henry. In such cases the least reinforcement is sufficient to effect a rout, and that of the Spanish van-guard was complete. The royalists in turn became the pursuers, advancing towards a body of three hundred horse, accompanied by Mayenne; which they would have attacked, had not the king ordered them to halt on perceiving that the hedges were lined with musqueteers, to whose fire they must have been exposed. Shortly after, two troops of Spanish cavalry issuing from a wood to renew the attack, Henry instantly charged, and, having dispersed them, returned to the spot from whence he had set forward; which movement he executed with so much order and superiority, that, according to Sully, he acquired in the same day, and nearly at the same moment, the honour of a most brilliant victory and a masterly retreat, of which history scarcely furnishes a parallel. On gaining his original position, the king found count de Chiverny, the knight D'Oise, Vitry, Clermont, Rissé, D'Arambure, D'Heures, Saint-Geran, and La Boulaye, who arrived with their companies, composing with that of the king about nine hundred horse. This fresh reinforcement, being observed by the enemy, made the constable of Castille believe that the whole royal army was at hand, and he did not dare hazard a battle. He therefore ordered the retreat of his army, regain-

ed the river Saône, which he crossed over a bridge he had secured beforehand; Henry pursuing and incessantly harassing him, until he had covered himself by means of the river in question.

Tassoni, in his poem of *La Secchia Rapita*, being partly heroic and partly burlesque, ridicules the constable of Castille. He states that Zacharias Tosabecchi, who commanded the troops at the city of Carpi, was a gouty old man, deprived of strength, but not deficient in courage; that he caused himself to be carried on a litter covered over with iron hoops: which conduct was imitated by the constable of Castille, who had a marvellous strong one made, which he used in Burgundy to shield himself from the musquet bullets of the belligerent monarch of the Gauls.

After this gallant action, Lacurée, whose life Henry had saved, came up to the prince, and clasping him round the thigh, exclaimed, "Sire, it is lucky to have a master who resembles you, for he saves the lives of his subjects once a day at least: twice have I experienced that grace on the part of your majesty; once on account of your orders issued, which ensured the general safety; and secondly, when you were pleased to cry, "*Take care of yourself, Lacurée.*"—"*It is thus,*" replied the monarch, "*I love to preserve my faithful servants.*"

It is astonishing that during such a vigorous and unequal encounter the king lost only six men, marshal Biron being wounded; while on the side of the Spaniards one hundred and thirty were

left on the field, sixty prisoners, and upwards of two hundred wounded gracing the victory of the royalists. Henry, a few days after, writing to princess Catherine, thus expressed himself: "My dear sister, The more I proceed, the more I admire the grace of God manifested towards me. During the battle of Monday, when I thought to encounter only twelve hundred horse, I may calculate two thousand. The constable of Castille was with the main army, as well as the duke de Mayenne, who saw and knew me perfectly well, as I have ascertained from their trumpeters and prisoners. They sent to request the return of many Italian and Spanish officers, who, not being among the captured, must have been buried with the slain. Many of my officers and young gentlemen beholding me in all directions, carried on a vigorous fire and displayed great valour, among whom I remarked Grammont, Termes, La Trimouille, D'Elbeuf, Boissy, Lacurée, Mainville, and the marquis de Mirebeau, who had no other armour than their gorgets and *gaillardets*" (a term not explained in Roquefort's Glossary of old French words), "in which they accomplished wonders. Those who were not present must feel infinite regret; for I was engaged with all my trusty friends, and saw the moment when you were on the point of becoming my inheritrix. I am well in health, God be praised, and love you as I do myself."

In several other letters despatched by the monarch after the conflict of Fontaine Française, he makes this curious remark, that less than nine

hundred cavalry had prevented an army of ten thousand foot and two thousand horse from entering the French territory, although there was not even a rivulet between them.

By this exploit the faithful Burgundians were completely restored to their sovereign. Dijon, as well as all the other cities of the province, had testified their zeal for the royal cause by sincerity of conduct and the most courageous exploits. Henry equally became master of various other towns in Franche Comté, and would have extended his advantages if the Swiss had not requested him to withdraw his forces, and grant that province the neutrality which it was accustomed to enjoy. The king had received great services from the Switzers; and in order to prove his gratitude he complied with their request, and even surrendered up the places he had captured in Franche Comté. After these successes Mayenne could indulge no farther hopes: he had refused the generous offers of the king with so much pertinacity; and Jeanin, the president, by his command, had forwarded letters to the prince couched in such insolent terms, that it was impossible in such a desperate situation he could indulge the thought of having recourse to the clemency of a monarch he had so repeatedly insulted; and, on the other hand, the duke expected neither personal succours nor protection of any description from Spain, having ascertained from intercepted letters that the duke of Feria was his mortal enemy. That Spanish nobleman

enjoyed the greatest credit at his court, and Mayenne had learned from the letters in question that the duke of Feria spoké of him in the most contemptuous terms; upon which account the former sent a challenge, which was not accepted by the Spanish grandee. Mayenne also wrote to the king of Spain, but received very unsatisfactory replies, so that these repeated insults, and such a succession of reverses, made known to him that talents, courage, and elevated rank cannot preserve from the most cruel humiliations rebellious spirits who claim the assistance of foreigners against their monarch and native country. In this dire extremity Mayenne thought of retiring to the court of the duke of Savoy, when the magnanimous Henry took pity on his fallen state.

Perefixe says, p. 193, that the greater part of the king's council, considering the procrastinations and artifices that had been resorted to by Mayenne during the last six years, in the course of which fifty treaties had been entered upon but never concluded, advised Henry to ratify no terms, but pursue the duke to destruction. The prudence and generosity, however, of the king did not coincide with such a measure, because he well remembered two maxims which abound in truth; one, that kings may always, when they please, subject rebellious subjects to their wills; the other, that it is dangerous to drive bold men to despair, particularly when they enjoyed rank so elevated as that of the duke de Mayenne. It

was on this account, that, of his own will, and in opposition to his council, Henry granted a truce; whereby he proved himself more enlightened than his ministers, as there is no doubt but an opposite line of conduct must have been highly prejudicial to his interests.

It would have been accounted a real virtue had the king yielded to the duke's supplications: the royal clemency, however, did more; in imitation of Divine mercy, the monarch anticipated him, making known to Mayenne that he was fully disposed to receive him into his good graces; and that, until the conditions of their reconciliation were agreed upon, he might retire to Chalons, the roads to which city would be left open for him, and that he should neither be besieged nor invested. Mayenne joyfully accepted these unexpected terms, merely requiring, for the honour of his character, that he should not publicly recognize the king until he had received the papal absolution.

The expulsion of the jesuits from France, it might naturally be imagined, would prove prejudicial to Henry's interest with the see of Rome, as Clement the Eighth was particularly favourable to that fraternity. The pontiff, however, who narrowly watched the conduct of the monarch, being well convinced of his sincerity, attended only to the dictates of justice and religion; continued deaf to the intrigues, prayers, and menaces of Spain; and conducted himself throughout the affair with equal impartiality and upright-

ness. D'Ossat and Perron, the king's ambassadors to Rome charged to negotiate the business, were zealously seconded in their views by cardinal Tollet, though a Spaniard and a jesuit. In these endeavours they were further supported by the grand duke of Tuscany, the Venetian republic, the pope's nephews, and many of the cardinals, among whom was Joyeuse, brother of the leaguer, who manifested particular disinterestedness, and proved of the greatest utility in procuring the pontiff's acquiescence.

Anquetil, in his Spirit of the League, vol. iii. p. 324, states that a seasonable remark of Seraphin Olivier, auditor of the Rota, made the pope decide upon granting Henry absolution. His holiness having enquired of the former, "What was said in Rome concerning the troubles of France?"—"They say," replied Olivier coldly, "that Clement the Seventh by his impetuosity lost England, and that Clement the Eighth by his tardiness will lose France."

Having fixed upon the 17th of September, 1595, to give Henry absolution, the ceremony was performed with the greatest possible solemnity; and when Clement pronounced the words *Most Christian King*, which terminated the formula of his absolution, the drums and trumpets were heard, together with discharges from the cannon of the castle of Saint-Angelo. Cardinal Joyeuse then officiated at the *Te-Deum*, and affixed the arms of France and Navarre over the gate of his palace; the city of Rome was illuminated; and

some days after, the bull of absolution was forwarded to France in order to be presented to the king. All the conditions exacted of the monarch by the see of Rome in this act, are given at length in vol. 8778, in the royal library of manuscripts at Paris.

While these affairs were transacted at Rome, the king continued at Lyons, in order that he might with greater facility tranquillize Languedoc and Provence.

Marshal duke de Joyeuse had quitted the Capuchin convent to repair to that quarter of France in support of the League: he had for a length of time commanded Languedoc; but with a gentleness, moderation, and disinterestedness, the more to be admired, as such qualities were rarely to be met with among the leading chiefs of either party at that period. The duke retained under his obedience Toulouse, Narbonne, Rodez, Carcasone, with some other places; and notwithstanding his army was by no means considerable, Henry had not been able to dispossess him. Letters however despatched from Rome by the cardinal, brother of Joyeuse, stating that the pope felt inclined to grant the king absolution, the duke only continued on the defensive; and while Henry remained at Lyons, having sounded him on the subject of peace, Joyeuse accepted the truce which was tendered him by the monarch.

Provence uniformly continued a prey to the tyranny of the duke d'Epernon, who there main-

tained himself in spite of Henry's commands. The prince had despatched thither Dufresne, counsellor of state, to engage the duke to surrender his government peacefully to the duke of Guise, giving him assurances that he should be rewarded in a princely manner. The duke, who was neither a royalist nor a leaguer, and only desired to be D'Epernon with independence, replied, that he had taken that province by force of arms from the duke of Savoy, who was termed by Henry the "fox of Dauphiny," and the League, at the expense of his blood, and that of his relatives and friends; that the government, therefore, could not be taken from him, without throwing a slur upon his reputation; and that he would support his pretensions, and not relinquish them but with life. Dufresne having made useless efforts to soften the duke, declared, that he had orders on the king's part to state, that in case he persisted in his rebellion, he would repair in person to drive him out, and make him feel the weight of his indignation. "Well, well," exclaimed the enraged duke, "let him come; I will serve him as a harbinger, not to prepare lodgings for him, but to burn all such as occur on his passage." However, notwithstanding these ridiculous threats, D'Epernon some days after signed a truce which the king had commanded him to ratify with the duke of Guise, but which was very ill attended to.

The duke de Mercœur was uniformly cantoned in Brittany, of which province he possessed a

part, and was supported by a Spanish force; the king, however, opposed to that nobleman marshal D'Aumont, one of the greatest generals of his time. From the period when the latter assumed the government of Brittany, he had not only prevented Mercœur from making any fresh conquests, but had captured from him several towns. D'Aumont followed up his successes with a zealous attachment, that surpassed even the activity of youth; he besieged the fortress of Comper, and exposing his person with the ardour of a true soldier, received a wound from an arquebuse, which shattered the bone of his arm, between the wrist and the elbow; and on falling, his only expression was, "*I have caught it.*" The marshal died fifteen days after, at the age of seventy. Henry, his officers, soldiers, and the whole of France, were alike sensible of the loss of that great man; the king stating in public, that he was deprived of a faithful subject and a friend, together with a general, as praiseworthy for modesty and disinterestedness, as renowned for skill, bravery, and the rarest prudence. Notwithstanding all the troubles that agitated France, D'Aumont had acquired the esteem of every party. Turquaud, master of requests, whose probity justly entitled him to rank his friend, received the marshal's parting breath. D'Aumont, while expiring, charged him to acquaint the king that he did not regret the loss of life, every moment of which had been spent in his service; and recommended his children never to forget that

"True glory consists in deserving the reputation of an honest man, and remaining inviolably faithful to religion, king, and country." The conduct of the descendants of this hero proved that his words were at the same time an oracle and prophetic.

The king still continuing at Lyons, was there joined by brave Lesdiguières, who was accompanied by young Créqui, his son-in-law, Henry being at the time engaged in tilting at the ring in the square of Bellecour. Lesdiguières, who had so faithfully served the prince, had been long separated from him; when the king, overjoyed on perceiving him at a distance, galloped up, holding his lance in the rest, and, presenting its point to Lesdiguières, cried out, "*Ah, my old Huguenot, you are a dead man!*" and then, springing from his horse, clasped him several times in his arms, a public recompense justly offered for the signal services of an old and faithful warrior.

After regulating several affairs, Henry repaired to Picardy, which he found in great disorder, owing to the unfortunate death of Henry d'Orleans, duke de Longueville, who was accidentally killed, on entering the town of Dourlens, while in the act of conversing with captain Ramel. Upon that occasion, the garrison being drawn out to fire a volley in honour of his arrival, a stray ball threw down the captain, and mortally wounded the duke, who expired two days after; which circumstance we have previously adverted to in the chapter concerning Henry's amours. The

prince de Longueville, who was modest and abounded in courage, was particularly regretted by the king as one of his faithful adherents, whom he lost at a period when he was most essential to him.

The Spaniards commenced the campaign of Picardy at a very early period; their general, count Fuentes, having an army of twelve thousand foot, three thousand horse, and twenty pieces of cannon. He became master of Catelet, a very poor place, ill provided with ammunition; and then marched to the attack of Dourlens. Count de Saint Pol, marshal Bouillon, and admiral Villars, united their troops to compel him to raise the siege without awaiting the arrival of the duke de Nevers, who was only distant one day's march with five hundred horse and seven hundred infantry. The king, after the death of the duke de Longueville, had confided to Nevers the command of his forces in Picardy; but marshal Bouillon would not obey him, which jealousy and bad understanding were the cause of a day very fatal to France.—De Rosne, a French officer of considerable talent, attached to the League, having learned that a quarrel existed between Bouillon and Villars, maintained in the Spanish council that the forces ought to march directly forward and encounter the royalists; which advice was adopted. Being camp-marshal of the whole army, Fuentes, aware of his capability, caused all his orders to be punctually fulfilled. De Rosne, after providing every thing necessary for the defence

of the trenches, ranged his forces in order for battle, and marched to attack the French. We will not pretend to give an accurate detail of this affair, which has been differently recorded by the partisans of Villars and Bouillon; as there are no testimonies sufficiently correct to condemn in a positive manner either of those commanders. Sully, in his Memoirs, accuses Bouillon in direct terms with having led on the catholic troops to be butchered, in order that he might ruin the cause of Villars, whom he abandoned. But it must also be remembered, that Sully uniformly hated Bouillon, and that he was the intimate friend of Villars, who became the victim of this fatal conflict. It appears beyond a doubt that Bouillon made too hasty a retreat in order to save his Calvinist followers; while the forces of Villars were cut to pieces after fighting with the greatest courage. Villars, with a gentleman named Sesseval, was made prisoner, when both were massacred in cold blood by the Spaniards, who reproached them with having abandoned the cause of the League, which had loaded them with favours. This victory made the Spaniards masters of Dourlens, which they carried by assault, and slaughtered upwards of two thousand persons without any distinction of age or sex, crying out that it was in revenge for the affair of Ham; at which place Humières had previously put the Spanish garrison to the sword. From thence the Spaniards went to besiege Cambrai, which was commanded for the king by Balagny,

who, not having expected the attack, was very ill provided for the defence of the place, having only a garrison of six hundred men. Notwithstanding this, however, it is said that the Spaniards would not have succeeded in taking the town, which maintained a siege of seven months, had it not been for the hatred which the inhabitants entertained towards Balagny; against whom they at length revolted, when, barricading themselves against the garrison, they sent to count Fuentes, and requested a capitulation, which was granted on very favourable terms. The Spanish commander then summoned the citadel to surrender, at the same time informing Devic, who was in the fortress, that he well knew they had only bread sufficient for eight days. Devic, finding there was no expectation of succours, at length surrendered the citadel on the 4th of October, marching out with drums beating, the matches of their gun-locks lighted, flags flying, and followed by all their goods and baggage.

Balagny, says Mathieu the historian, retired like a coward, and according to his deserts, as it was in consequence of his avarice and extortions that the town was lost. A Spaniard happening to express his astonishment on beholding Balagny conducting his mistress with him in a boat, the latter remarked that love softened the rigours of fortune. "You are right," said the Spaniard, "and above all in the present instance; for you will now have much less business on your hands than you had before."

All these disasters sensibly affected the king, whose arms were only victorious where he was personally present; his greatest affliction, however, was the having in so short a period lost three of his best generals and friends, whose characters in other respects were truly estimable, namely, marshal D'Aumont, the duke de Longueville, and Villars.

Henry was at Beauvais when this deplorable news arrived; upon which he testified to the dukes of Bouillon and Nevers the discontent their conduct and misunderstanding had created, to which these disasters might be attributed. He then assembled a council, and declared he was resolved on collecting his forces and proceeding in person to give the enemy battle; when the duke de Nevers remarking that the monarch surely would not think of exposing his person to such danger, "*That may do very well for you,*" said Henry, "*who have only approached the foe within seven leagues.*" This laconic observation came like a thunderbolt from the lips of a monarch who never uttered an insult, and who by his actions and character had become the supreme judge in cases of honour. The duke, confounded, made no reply; but the words inflicted so deep a wound in his heart that he fell sick and expired at the end of a fortnight. The king, with good reason, regretted his loss, and during the duke's malady sent several times to inquire as to the state of his health, making known that he would also wait upon him in person; all the power and goodness, however, of Henry were incapable of

repairing the ill which a word uttered in a moment of passion had produced. The duke returned thanks to his monarch, adding that it was too late, and expired the ensuing day.

The king, says Sully, being recalled to Paris on emergent affairs, repaired to the capital, when he had an interview with Rosny, at which, unburthening his heart, he confessed that he had been imprudently led to declare war against Spain from advices received which made success appear inevitable; he agreed that, had he not so promptly broken off the negotiations, he might have obtained peace, and with sincerity avowed, "The fault was so great that it was sufficient to precipitate France into greater miseries than those from which she had so recently escaped." From that period Henry was in the habit of saying, "That a declaration of war was the thing of all others which required the most solid reflection; and that, however seriously we may dwell upon its consequences, it is very rarely that we think enough."—See Sully's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 498.

The king at the commencement of the year performed an action that proved of great utility to the catholic religion. Henry had resolved to educate in the Romish faith the prince of Condé, then seven years old, who had continued at Saint Jean d'Angely from the period of his father's death. The prince, who apparently conceived the faith he had adopted to be that of salvation, was anxious to see so great a subject of the

realm imbued with similar tenets. For this purpose it was necessary to engage the mother of Condé, the only person possessing absolute right over him, to acquiesce voluntarily in the measure. For this purpose Henry, as a pretext, caused the parliament to consider the accusation alleged against Charlotte de la Trimouille by the Huguenots, who suspected her of having been instrumental in the poisoning of her husband the prince of Condé, father of the youth in question. The Calvinists, who already looked up to him as their future protector, were anxious to retain him, on the princess being invited to Paris; however, as she was legitimately empowered to claim her offspring, the prince was surrendered up by the Huguenot leaders, and conducted by the duchess to the capital. The princess at the same time received double absolution, abjuring Calvinism and being justified by an edict of parliament from the dreadful crime that had been alleged against her. She confided her son to the king's paternal care, who appointed as his governor John de Vivone, marquis de Pisani, a man of acknowledged merit; and when the young prince had been tutored on the subject of religion, Henry accompanied him to mass on the 24th of January, 1596.

The duke de Mayenne, confined at Chalens, learned with infinite satisfaction that the king had received papal absolution, as he most ardently desired to terminate his affairs with the monarch. Henry consented to have the conditions argued

upon with president Jeanin, the very individual who had acted culpably towards him, and whose qualities he nevertheless so highly esteemed as shortly after to appoint him one of his ministers. The subject most embarrassing in concluding the treaty with Mayenne was, his being instrumental to the death of Henry the Third; as, during the proceedings that took place after the king's entry into Paris, the duke de Mayenne was accused of having held two private conferences with James Clement, the regicide. The duke stipulated that he should be declared altogether innocent, equally with the princes and princesses of his house; but he was also desirous that this article should be worded in such a manner, that from the terms adopted, it should not be surmised they stood in need of any grace and abolition. The generosity of the monarch knew no bounds: Mayenne, that rebellious subject, who had caused so much evil to the king and France, and who was deprived of all support, obtained every thing he might have stipulated for at the head of a victorious army.

Henry conducted himself towards the duke with excessive generosity as regarded every other topic of the discussion. He undertook the liquidation of his debts, freed his estates from mortgage, and acknowledged that Mayenne and the rest of his party had only taken up arms in support of the catholic persuasion. Finally, Henry ceded to the duke three places of surety—two in Burgundy and one in Champaine, with a privi-

lege that the Calvinists should not be permitted to hold any assemblies there.

We cannot refrain from expressing astonishment at this last clause, as deficient in policy as it was contrary to the royal dignity. Henry had uniformly refused places of surety to the Calvinists, and it was therefore very singular that he should accord them to rebels, that is to say the most culpable of the factious. The Huguenots, accustomed to be dissatisfied when any concessions were made to the catholics most devoted to his person, had on this occasion very just reason for complaining, since they found their persecutor and the enemy of their sovereign obtain such conditions, at a period when he had no power to exact any terms of a favourable nature. When this edict was laid before the parliament, many difficulties were raised in respect to its being registered. Diana of France, natural daughter of Henry the Second and sister of Henry the Third, and Louisa of Lorraine, widow of the latter monarch, protested against that particular article of the edict which justified the princes of Lorraine, so much suspected of having connived at the assassination of Henry the Third; and, in spite of the king's orders, they persisted in their strenuous opposition.

The treaty with the duke de Nemours, maternal brother of Mayenne, was carried on at the same period; but while the parties named were engaged, that prince died. Henry, who well knew how to appreciate merit, even in the persons of

his enemies, testified sincere regret that his death had prevented him from receiving marks of his esteem. The treaty was, in consequence, ratified with his brother, the marquis de Saint Sorlin. At this period also, marshal Joyeuse came to an amicable adjustment with Henry, yielding up the province of Languedoc, and all the cities which remained at his disposal. The king loaded that noble with marks of distinction, that were justly due to him for the equitable manner in which he had governed Languedoc, and the profound respect he had uniformly testified in regard to the king, even while a member of the League. This nobleman subsequently proved that his revolt was not the result of ambition; as he relinquished all earthly benefits to return to the Capuchin monastery, of which he took the habit, and where he continued until his death.

Mayenne at length repaired to court, and joined the king at Monceaux, where the meeting took place in the park. "Henry advanced towards the duke," says Sully, "and embraced him thrice, saying that he was the long wished-for." Mayenne, falling on his knees, clasped the king's thigh, giving him assurances of submission and obedience, and acknowledging the obligations he felt by such a gentle reception, whereby he was delivered from Spanish arrogance and Italian duplicity. Henry having raised and again embraced him, stated that he had no doubt of his faith and sincerity, because an honest and courageous man, for which he knew him, had nothing so much at

heart as the strict observance of both. Then taking the duke by the hand, he began to walk with him very fast, pointing out the beauty of the avenues, and the agreeable situation of the mansion. The duke, who suffered from the sciatica, and dragged one leg with difficulty after the other, followed as fast as he was able, which Henry noticing, and also perceiving that the prince was heated and panting for breath, being at the time near Sully, whispered in his ear the following words: "If I continue much longer to make his fat carcase follow me, I shall be avenged without much pain, for all the evils which he has caused us; for he will assuredly be a dead man." Upon which Henry stopped, and turning to Mayenne with a smiling countenance, said: "Confess, cousin, that I walk quicker, and have fatigued you." "By my faith, sire," answered the prince, "it is true, and I swear to you I am so weary and short of breath, that if your majesty had continued to walk thus, I believe you would have killed me without being conscious of it." The king then embracing him, said laughingly, and presenting his hand: "Touch there, cousin, for that is all the ill and displeasure you will experience from me; and of that I pledge you heartily my honour and word, which I never yet did or will violate." "Sire," said the duke, kissing the royal hand, and bending his knee to the earth as well as he was able, "I believe it, as well as all other generous acts which can be hoped for from the best and bravest prince of our æra." "Moreover, cousin,"

resumed Henry, " in order that you may love and serve me the longer, go and repose yourself, take refreshment, and drink a little at the castle, for you stand in need of refreshment. I have some Arbois wine in my cellars, of which you shall have two bottles; I know you do not hate it; and there is Rosny, whom I depute to perform the honours of the house, and conduct you to your chamber; he is one of my oldest servants, and among the number of those who have experienced the greatest delight in seeing that you are desirous of loving and serving me heartily." Having thus expressed himself, the king turned round, and proceeded into the park. The duke, on leaving Henry, exclaimed aloud, " that the monarch at this interview had completely vanquished him." The king was well acquainted with the human heart; he was aware that in tempestuous times men are more justly appreciated by their characters than their actions. Notwithstanding the great wrongs he had experienced from the duke, that prince still possessed exalted sentiments of honour: those not imbued with them are easily gained over, but they are never to be relied upon; Henry confided in the faith of Mayenne, and he was correct in his judgment.

The king had still the duke de Mercœur to bring to his allegiance, who continued master of Brittany; to drive the duke d'Epernon from Provence; and to subdue Marseilles, which suffered from the tyranny of Charles Casaux and

Louis D'Aix, two aspiring and insolent citizens of that place.

Henry attached the greatest importance to the possession of that rich and beautiful city, the courageous inhabitants of which had at all periods testified a love for their country and a sincere attachment for their sovereigns. The king caused letters to be forwarded to the rebels, making them advantageous offers in case they returned to their duty; which communications were forwarded by a trumpeter, who, chancing to meet Louis d'Aix near Marseilles, presented them to him. This factious citizen, as ferocious as arrogant, who had caused the monarch's portrait to be publicly burned, read the letters, tore them in pieces, trampled them under foot, uttering the most brutal language against his prince; after which, causing the messenger to be seized, he ordered his ears to be cut off.

Louis d'Aix, and his companion Casaux, who had nominated themselves consuls of Marseilles, had become powerful by the aid of a numerous band of cut-throats, collected from all countries, whom they kept in pay. Upheld by the court of Spain, whose fleet was in the port, they had come to the resolution of receiving a Spanish garrison in case the royalists persisted in attacking the city; they also kept up some correspondence with the duke d'Epernon, but manifested no obedience towards him. Being in possession of all the forces, as well as the public funds, environed by sanguinary satellites,

spurred by insatiable cupidity, and by a ridiculous desire of independence, which they denominated a love of liberty, those rebels had usurped a momentary but absolute power, which creates unbridled tyranny; and ferocity without bounds. Their plunderings, cruelty, and insolence, had reduced the inhabitants to that desperate state of misfortune, when the soul, exhausted by the energies of indignation and the violence of grief, falls without being resigned into that state of profound consternation which is the last degree of mental despair. The duke of Guise, who was governor of the province, undertook to subdue the rebels, and succeeded, by gaining over a man named Peter Libertat, who was in the confidence of the two tyrants. This individual, a Corsican by birth, very intelligent, and abounding in courage, was promised fifty thousand crowns, together with the post of magistrate; and he promised to surrender up the city to the duke of Guise.

The 17th February, 1596, was the day appointed for the fulfilment of this project; at which period the duke, with a body of troops, marched into the environs of the city. Libertat, who commanded at the royal gate through which Louis D'Aix and Casaux repaired every morning with a troop of cavalry, had appointed for signal that he would lower the portcullis as soon as they had left Marseilles, in order that they might not, by returning, escape the troops who should fall upon them. Unfortunately Casaux on that day

did not quit the city; Louis D'Aix riding forth alone, accompanied by twelve horsemen. The duke of Guise, being apprised that the portcullis was down, advanced with his forces; but having been perceived from the city, the cannon on the ramparts, and those of the fort Notre Dame of the guard, obliged them to retreat: he, in consequence, believed that the project was discovered, and had failed; yet, nevertheless, did not retire, resolved to fight with the garrison in case a sortie should be made. Libertat then adopted a courageous and decisive mode of action: he sent to acquaint Casaux that his presence was absolutely necessary at the royal gate, who proceeded thither in all haste. Libertat, when he appeared, advanced towards him; upon which being questioned by Casaux, the latter, while thus engaged, was run through the body by Libertat, and immediately despatched, while on the ground, by his brother: upon which they both attacked the escort, killed the serjeant, and put the rest to flight; crying out, "*Long live the King!*" A courier was instantly forwarded to the duke of Guise, who returned at the head of his troop; when the portcullis was raised at his approach, and he took possession of the gate. Louis D'Aix, who had perceived the troops spread about the country, was desirous of re-entering the city, when, seeing the portcullis down, he partly divined the truth, proceeded to a bastion where he had stationed five hundred Spaniards, and by the assistance of a rope, succeeded in mounting

the wall, and gaining the city. At the head of four hundred men, he then marched to the royal gate, where he was put to flight by the duke of Guise, who followed him until he took refuge in a fort, of which the prince also became master. D'Aix, however, effected his escape, and for some time wandered about in the open country, merely possessing, after all his plunder and extortion, a gold chain and a turquoise, which he gave to a fisherman who transported him in a boat to the Spanish fleet. This villain ultimately retired to Genoa, where he died, covered with just opprobrium, and in great misery.

Thus, by the courage and prudence of the duke of Guise, this celebrated city recovered its glory and happiness, under the dominion of its lawful sovereign; who considered the delivery of Marseilles as an event of such high importance, that when the news was conveyed to him, he exclaimed, "*It is now I am a king!*"

"The duke of Guise," says Mezeray, "rendered the king another important service, by humiliating the arrogance of the duke d'Epernon, and compelling him to submit." The same historian acquaints us, that after the defeat of the duke d'Epernon, the country people who had taken up arms against him, adopted the same conduct towards his soldiers, who were for the most part Gascons, and detested by the natives of Provence, as did the Israelites of old to the Ephraimites. The peasantry had followed at a distance the march of the duke of Guise, to

profit by the spoils of the run-aways, for whom they laid wait in the defiles and narrow passes. This conduct on the part of the inhabitants decided the duke d'Epernon in abandoning Provence; added to which, the following attempt meditated against his life, fully demonstrated the hatred that was entertained towards him. A countryman filled two sacks with gunpowder, and also placed in the same a few locks of arquebuses, which he inserted in such a manner, that on opening the sacks a light would be struck, and the powder explode. The contriver of this expedient then conveyed the sacks to a house at Brignols, where the duke lodged, stating to the hostess that they were full of corn, and that, until he could dispose of them, he requested she would permit him to place them in a low apartment beneath that occupied by Epernon. A baker having applied to purchase the corn, and opened a sack, the powder became ignited, and a part of the flooring was, in consequence, blown up. The duke, who chanced to be dining, remained on his chair, resting on a beam that continued uninjured, as the fire in a great measure passed out of the windows which were open. This miraculous escape produced more effect than all the losses Epernon had experienced; and urged him to abandon a territory where such means were employed to effect his destruction. The duke, by his haughtiness and rigid conduct, had rendered himself odious in his government. Henry, who with such greatness of soul, forgot personal inju-

ries, could not, however, forgive the tyranny which that nobleman had exercised in Provence. He, however, granted him very advantageous terms; and as a recompense for the government of that territory, appointed him commander of Augoumois, Saintonge, and Perigord, which were to be governed by his son at his death. Epernon left Provence on the 20th of May, in order to visit the king, who received him with great courtesy, though coolly, and never could be brought to love him.

The generosity of Henry towards Epernon is the more praiseworthy, when it is considered, that the duke had, to all appearance, carried on a secret correspondence with the court of Spain: as in a letter, written by cardinal D'Ossat, dated the 17th of January, 1596, he makes mention of the correspondences which he kept up at Turin with the duke of Savoy, at Milan with the constable of Castille; and in another letter, of Mayenne to the duke de Mercœur, quoted by Duplessis Mornay, is contained as follows:— "*I have just received news that M. d'Epernon has joined our party*:" this being at the very time when Epernon was making the greatest protestations of fidelity to the monarch.

Henry still continued his siege of La Fère, which made little progress, although the town had been invested for six months. The archduke Albert of Austria, then cardinal, had arrived in the Low Countries to assume the government in place of count Fuentes, who had performed such a bril-

liant campaign the preceding year: a success that originated in the talents of a rebel Frenchman named De Rosne, a man of undaunted courage and the greatest military talent, whose exploits, however, have not rendered his name illustrious, being employed in the cause of strangers against his king and country. The archduke gave him his full confidence, charging him to direct all the military operations; when De Rosne advised that in order to make a diversion in respect to La Fère, a movement should be directed upon Calais; and this counsel was adopted. De Rosne, in consequence, undertook the siege, which was followed up with such vigour that he shortly became master of all the outworks. No sooner was Henry made acquainted with this attack than he despatched Sancy to England for the purpose of soliciting succours from Elizabeth; which she was the better able to afford, as the earl of Essex was then in the Channel commanding a powerful fleet, stationed there for the purpose of watching the movements of the Spaniards. During the whole period of Henry's struggle to acquire his rightful throne, the queen proved a generous friend; but, when she found him at the head of such a powerful nation, her jealousy was awakened from political motives, and, in consequence, Sancy vainly strove to obtain from that princess any assistance of real benefit in the present emergency of the king. Elizabeth concluded by stating her willingness to undertake the defence of Calais, in case Henry would permit her to

occupy that town. "Madame," answered Sancy, "the king may still prevent Calais from being taken, or recapture it if lost; but he would much rather the place was in possession of the Spaniards than in the hands of your majesty." Elizabeth, astonished at this remark, replied with evident emotion, "I do not conceive, sir, that the king has commissioned you to utter such language in my presence."—"No, madam," said Sancy, "because the king my master did not imagine that such a demand could possibly have been made: he so dearly cherishes the honour of your friendship, that there is nothing on earth that could recompense him for the misfortune of losing it; and, were you possessor of Calais, you would become his enemy."

This adroit compliment did not satisfy the queen, who closed the interview by remarking that she would make known her intentions towards the king through the medium of her own ambassador Sidney: the negotiation, however, terminated in nothing.

The king, says Mathieu, when the above proposal was made by the ambassador of Elizabeth, turning his back upon the diplomatist, uttered the following words: "*If I am to be bitten, I should like as well to submit to the lion as the lioness.*"

Henry left the management of the siege of La Fère to the constable Montmorency, and, placing himself at the head of a body of troops, proceeded to succour Calais. Having marched to Boulogne, he embarked twice with many noblemen

and a body of troops, for the purpose of throwing succours, if possible, into the town; but was repulsed each time by adverse winds, and, when at length he learned the loss of that place, he took care to conceal his chagrin, which would have attached a greater importance to this misfortune in the eyes of his adherents.

The king was subjected to experience additional sorrow by the surrender of the town of Ardres, which was taken by the Spaniards in four days; but shortly after, Henry became master of La Fère. The Spaniards having made the treaty, out of respect for the monarch refused to accept any hostage; stating that they knew Henry to be a generous and honourable prince, and that his word was at all times sufficient; the Spaniards were, in consequence, soon compelled to abandon Picardy.

In the month of July the pope sent to France, in quality of his legate, cardinal Alexander de Medicis, who, by the king's command, was received with the greatest honours; and when the monarch understood that the cardinal had arrived at Chartres, he proceeded post to that city, in order to pay him a visit, being accompanied by the duke de Mayenne, to whom Henry made the following remark: "*Come, cousin, let us pay a visit to the legate; for you, equally with myself, stand in need of good absolution.*" This legate, who had greatly contributed in procuring Henry's absolution from the pope, was a churchman of very superior merit, possessing all the virtues

of a true ecclesiastic, combined with the qualifications of a great statesman; so that in the end he proved very instrumental in bringing about the peace, which subsequently took place. Henry, in order to remedy the disorders and contribute to the necessities of the state, resolved to convene an assembly of the notables at Rouen, instead of Paris, in consequence of a dangerous epidemic disorder having broken out in the latter city. Since the death of Francis the First the finances had been in the most deplorable state of confusion; Catherine having begun to dissipate them by her extravagant taste for festivities and magnificence, and above all by an intriguing policy, that uniformly proves ruinous in the extreme; for in order to create quarrels, disunite, and corrupt, she lavished enormous sums; a talent of this nature being nothing more than a knowledge of the means of squandering gold. Henry the Third, by his profusion to his favourites, completed the disorder of the financial system of the kingdom; so that, on mounting the throne, Henry the Fourth had only those sacred debts to discharge which had been contracted during his adversity; and, being uniformly obliged to head his forces and conquer towns and provinces, he had not as yet been able to occupy his thoughts with the administration of the finances. It was at this juncture Henry wrote to Rosny the following letter, handed down in his Memoirs, which sufficiently displays the situation of the monarch at the period in question.

"My friend, I am desirous of making known to you the precise state to which I am reduced at this juncture; being such, that I find myself near my enemies, having, as I may say, scarcely a horse to fight upon, or a complete harness to put upon its back; my shirts are in rags, and my doublet worn out at the elbows. My soup-pot is frequently overturned, and for these two days past I have dined and supped at the expense of others; for my purveyors inform me they have no longer the means of supplying my table, which is not surprising, as they have received no money for these six months. Judge, therefore, whether I deserve to be so treated: and if I ought any longer to permit my treasurers to starve me to death, while they indulge themselves at their tables covered with every luxury; my house abounding in poverty, while theirs display riches and opulence, &c." These details appear almost incredible, they are nevertheless authentic, for it is impossible to suspect the least exaggeration.

In proof of the above statements Le Grain says in his eighth book, "I have seen him (the king) in a white stuff doublet covered with dirt from the cuirass he had carried, and in holes at the elbows, while his trunk hose were quite worn out on the left side, owing to the friction of his sword."

The letters written by the king to Rosny had two different modes of address: those wherein he denominated him *mu friend* were penned

throughout with his own hand, without being countersigned by a secretary of state; but in all those of the latter description he entitled Rosny *my cousin*, because he acknowledged that the house of Bethune boasted the honour of having been anciently allied to the royal house of France.

The superintendent d'O, administrator of the king's finances, had given his master the greatest proofs of attachment; but his prodigality was beyond all bounds; and Sully, in his Memoirs, even asperses his probity. Some days prior to the death of d'O, several persons having applied to the king for the post of governor of Paris and the Isle of France, he thus expressed himself by way of derision, "*There will be a vast number deceived, as I have a great desire to fill that post myself, because no rascals are ever found to govern Paris; so that, in case I occupy the station, I will conduct affairs like the rest, if it so pleases Heaven.*"

Some days after, Henry having won four hundred crowns in the racquet-court, ordered the attendants to collect and place them in his cap, exclaiming aloud, "*Well, those are mine for a certainty; no one will purloin them, because they will not pass through the hands of my treasurers.*"—*Journal of Henry the Fourth*, 1596.

At his death, instead of naming a new superintendent, Henry formed a council of finance, which tended only to increase the disorder. Upon this he introduced new members, and, among others, Rosny, who directing the scruti-

nizing glance of affectionate zeal combined with the severest probity on these bewildered accompts, acquired an insight while observing, discovered the scandalous frauds that had been practised, and became fully convinced that, in the administration of finance, the only proof of probity and real talent is that the plan of accompts should be perfectly clear, that every honest man should be superior in that department, and combine with good sense, vigilance, and order, the fruits of persevering industry and the greatest firmness of character. Rosny drew upon himself the hatred of the council, which he had expected; but he well knew that with a clear-sighted and equitable monarch, probity must always triumph over intrigues and calumny. Rosny advised the king to despatch certain persons into the principal departments of his kingdom, to take an exact account of the actual revenues of the state, the diminution they had experienced, the augmentations that might be effected, and offered to repair to several in person for that purpose. The king approved of this project, and named six commissioners, who immediately set out for the different territories which they were appointed to visit. Rosny, in the course of his inquiries, made the most ample discoveries of the iniquities that had been practised; upon which he dwells at length in vol. iii. p. 73, &c. of his Memoirs.

Upon Rosny's return, he found that the blackest calumnies were disseminated abroad respecting him, it having been stated to the king, among

other assertions, that he had only brought back so much money, in consequence of adopting the most extortionate and cruel means; that he had filled the prisons with individuals previously employed, and the commissaries of finance; and that by way of a vain bravado, he had conducted back in his suite about fifty in chains. Henry, guided by the vulgar maxim, too lightly received by honourable minds, believed only one half of these reports; but that was sufficient to exasperate a prince, who was the avowed enemy of all arbitrary proceedings. Rosny was, in consequence, received with great coldness; but he explained, and completely justified himself by positive proofs, from the aspersions levelled at his character. He had fortunately foreseen the machinations that would be practised against him, and therefore fortified himself with all the testimonies which could belie such false accusations; a wise precaution, that should always be taken by those who are intrusted with affairs of high importance. It too frequently occurs, that men possessing integrity, neglect such measures; but experience teaches, that in unravelling a long chain of confused accounts, innocence and uprightness can only escape by extreme prudence. Rosny, the worthy pupil of Henry the Great, profited the more by the lessons of his august master, as the impulses of passion never combated against his principles. Instructed by that great prince in the art of war and negotiations, he was no less indebted to him for his acquirements as a finan-

cier; in proof of which, Sully in his Memoirs states: "My ideas were in a great measure owing to the king's tuition, and I preserve with infinite care, whole accompts written with his own hand, although very long, upon subjects that occupied both of us. For this reason, I ought candidly to allow, that the greater part of the praise due to the administration of affairs under Henry the Fourth, belongs to him as a matter of right. Others might have laboured under him with equal fidelity and much more acumen than myself; for a monarch is never in want of faithful subjects, it is the people who stand in need of a good king."

Rosny is, perhaps, the only statesman of whom we may say with truth, that during his whole career he uniformly possessed each desirable quality in his social relations, as well as in the employments to which he was elevated, and the various situations he fulfilled. Brilliant, and consequently adventurous in combats; prudent and cool in great affairs; impassioned in his friendships; calm and reflecting in his conduct; full of amenity and even cheerful in his domestic circle, and imposingly grave in public; as a minister, gifted with severe and inflexible probity, combined with unshaken firmness; in friendship scrupulously just, but full of indulgence; an excellent husband, a good father; incomparable as a subject and a citizen, he possessed with so many virtues a combination of talents equally astonishing: to adroitness and solidity were added sound reason and admirable presence of mind.

Rosny seemed born to second the views of a hero; he was worthy of advising and serving the regenerator of a grand monarchy: a character truly rare, whose memory, revered by the French nation, can never be pronounced without recalling the æra of Henry the Great.

The sum which Rosny had collected in the provinces, amounted to fifteen hundred thousand livres, without having anticipated any of the current revenues. Some days after his arrival, the king ordered him to pay ten thousand crowns, which were due to six Swiss companies, and the amount was sent to the officers of those corps on the following morning. In the interim Mr. de Sancy despatched a note to Rosny, wherein he requested that the bearer might have ninety thousand crowns for the payment of the Swiss; which Rosny refused, alleging that he had nothing to do with the commands of Mr. de Sancy; upon which the latter immediately proceeded to the king, who exclaimed, on beholding him, "Well, Sancy, are you not going to pay the Swiss?" "No, sire," was the reply, "for it is not M. Rosny's pleasure, nor do I know whether you will have more influence over him than myself." "What is the meaning of all this?" resumed the monarch, who, after a few seconds' pause, continued: "I understand the business: people will never cease to calumniate that man, because I place reliance on him, and he serves me with fidelity." Rosny, happening to appear at the moment, was hailed by the king, who demanded

what misunderstanding existed between him and Sancy. "Sire," answered Rosny, "not knowing how Mr. de Sancy intended to dispose of ninety thousand crowns, which he demanded at my hands, instead of ten thousand that are due to the Swiss; I did not deem it prudent to remit them without your majesty's commands." This produced an immediate altercation between the parties; which became so violent, that Henry was compelled to command silence. In the gallery of Saint Ouen, at Rouen, where this scene occurred, were assembled a number of courtiers, most of whom, weary of the arrogance of Sancy, were charmed to witness his disgrace, and said among themselves: "It will be difficult for those two individuals to exercise for any length of time the same functions, without supplanting one another; but in the present state of the king's temper, the most frugal will, no doubt, gain the victory."

The king having convoked the assembly of notables at Rouen, arrived in that city on the 16th of October, where he found assembled all the great and leading personages of the state, the clergy, the nobility, with the magistracy of finance. Henry repaired to the great hall of the Abbey of Saint Ouen, accompanied by the legate, several cardinals, and bishops, the great lords of the realm, the high presidents of the sovereign courts, many gentlemen, with a number of seneschals and city magistrates; in short, all such as were freely chosen to assist; the king having

been unwilling to name any one. The monarch, seated in the midst of that immense chamber, on a throne raised under a canopy, surrounded by the prelates and grand dignitaries of the state, delivered with equal grace and majesty, the following sensible and manly speech:

"If it was my glory to stand forth as an excellent orator, I should have selected more elegant phrases than good intentions; my ambition, however, prompts me to something more elevated than the delivery of a brilliant speech; I aspire to the glorious title of liberator and restorer of France. Already, favoured by Heaven, the advice of my faithful servants, and the swords of my brave and generous nobility, (from whom I do not distinguish my princes, the quality of gentleman being the most praiseworthy title we can possess,) I have rescued it from slavery and from ruin. I am now desirous of restoring it to its pristine force and ancient splendor. Participate, my subjects, in this second glory, as you have partaken in the first. I have not summoned you hither, like my predecessors, to make you blindly sanction all my wishes; I have convened you in order to receive, to believe, and to adopt your advice; in a word, to place myself *at nurse* under your guardianship. This is a wish that rarely occurs to princes, to *grey beards*, and the victorious; but the love I bear my subjects, and the great desire I have to preserve my state, make me look upon every thing as easy and honourable." *Perefixe*, p. 226.

It is a fact that at a very early period of life Henry bore strong marks of old age; his hair, in particular, turning very grey: wherefore, on being asked the reason, he replied, "*It is the wind of my adversities which had blown there.*"

The chancellor then proceeded to reply, by explaining the necessities of the state, and the large expenditure the king was compelled to make for the maintenance of the war; and concluded by exhorting the deputies to adopt efficacious measures to afford those succours to the king which were so essentially necessary.

Many expedients were in consequence proposed; when it was at length decided to suspend for one year the revenues of the officers of the state, and to add a halfpenny per pound to all merchandize that should enter inclosed cities, with the exception of corn. By this means some specie came into the royal coffers, but not sufficient to provide for the pressing emergencies; and Henry was at a future period obliged to suppress this additional halfpenny upon each pound sold, in consequence of the malpractices to which that impost gave rise.

After the first sitting of the states, the king inquired of his mistress the duchess of Beaufort, what she thought of his speech; Gabrielle having been concealed behind the tapestry for the purpose of hearing it delivered. "I never yet witnessed any thing better," was her reply: "I was only surprised to hear your majesty speak of *placing yourself at nurse!*" "*Ventre Saint Gris,*"

exclaimed the monarch, "*that is very true, but then I intend it shall be with my sword at my side!*"

The same day, while at dinner, the conversation happening to turn on the subject of sieur Langlois, provost of the merchants, who having been deputed to harangue the king on the part of the third estate, had so badly acquitted himself that the advocate *Talon* was obliged to finish the discourse: Henry, laughing, remarked: "If my provost has the tongue in his *heel*, he is equally a worthy man; nor do I esteem him one jot the less." (Talon, in French, means the heel.)

A want of money, however, was not the point which gave the king most uneasiness; the state abounded in misunderstandings, and divisions, which were on the eve of breaking out between the Catholics and the Calvinists.

Henry, with stoic patience, endeavoured to calm one party and intimidate the other; but he merely succeeded for the moment. There is always something dastardly in the overbearing conduct of the factious, since it never ceases to augment the difficulties of those it attacks. The public calamities of this year emboldened the seditious to such a degree, that they had the audacity to make an insulting proposal to Henry the Fourth; and engaged the duke de Montpensier to deliver their sentiments. This prince, although sincerely attached to his monarch, had much simplicity of character, and a mind very far from reflecting. He in consequence proposed to the king, on the part of the leading nobility, as the

only means of resisting the force of his enemies, the abandoning to the governors of provinces the proceeds of their governments as an hereditary right, being bound to the monarch in nothing except homage as their liege lord. He then added, that the whole, generally speaking, and each in particular, would undertake to pay and furnish in advance the troops and equipages necessary to form a sufficient army, which might be employed as his majesty though texpedient.

The duke de Montpensier, and the lords who had given him this commission, must have been very ignoraut of the history of their country. They apparently did not know that what they required took place upon the decline of the empire of Charlemagne, when the governors of provinces, abusing the weakness of his successors, had assumed to themselves a sovereignty in the governments confided to their charge. That when the French united to place the crown on the head of Hugues Capet, it was on condition that they should preserve their stations as sovereign fiefs emanating from the crown, which weakened and nearly destroyed the royal authority and the state, and prevented it from acquiring that splendour it possessed at the period of Charlemagne, and to which it attained under the successors of Hugues Capet.

It is, indeed, scarcely possible to imagine how a proposition, which had not been made to Henry III. at the period of his greatest distress, should be addressed by a prince of the blood to a hero

covered with glory by the most signal exploits, and destined by Heaven to regenerate a kingdom which it was sought to replunge into the state of anarchy that had characterized its earliest epochs.

Henry during this speech continued mute and immoveable, so sensibly was he struck with the affront levelled at his royal dignity; but, uniformly master of himself, he merely displayed great compassion for the duke de Montpensier on seeing him act so unworthy of himself, and spoke without the least acrimony. The king was so far from believing that it was ever possible to oblige him to consent to such a measure, and so determined to perish rather than submit to this degradation, that his great soul was more astonished than irritated, nor did he deign to enter into the least discussion upon the subject.

The duke de Montpensier soon became aware how much he had degraded his rank and character by hazarding such a proposal, and, blushing, demanded pardon of the prince, who received his excuses with paternal kindness. The duke then agreed with the king that he would acquaint those for whom he had had the weakness to act as interpreter, that, after reflecting on the singularity of the mission, he became aware of its extravagance, and was fully convinced it could not be mentioned without exciting the monarch's indignation in the strongest manner.

No renewal, therefore, of this proposition took place; but the Huguenots followed up their intrigues with more activity than ever. Notwith-

standing a royal prohibition, they held clandestine assemblies at Vendome, Loudun, and Saumur. The duke de Bouillon was highly instrumental in these proceedings, and fomented the discontents, in the hope of obtaining the title of protector of the Calvinists, and ranking himself chief of that powerful party. It was in vain that Henry desired them to rely on his royal word, and only occupy themselves, as he himself did, in seeking to alleviate the exigencies of the state, in carrying on the war, and driving the Spaniards from the territory of France. These addresses were superfluous: the king's embarrassments and the impending danger were only gratifying subjects for the seditious, who triumphed in the hope of realizing their ambitious projects. Henry, overwhelmed with anxieties, was in a much more painful situation subsequently than prior to his accession to the throne. While fighting for his kingdom, each adherent flattered himself with chimerical hopes; but his change of religion began to spread the most unjust apprehensions among the Huguenots; and when he had reconquered his crown, the most exaggerated pretensions were openly manifested among all parties; as if the sole duty of a monarch who had so many evils to repair, wounds to cicatrize, and foreign enemies to subdue, consisted in satisfying on the instant the immoderate desires of some turbulent and ambitious leaders. The catholics, though less factious, murmured in secret; while the Calvinists, restless and vindictive, re-

kindling in Paris, after such a lapse of years, the most odious recollections and implacable resentments, awaited nothing but a pretext to recommence a civil war, avenge themselves on the papists for the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and obtain by means of revolt that which the monarch refused to their importunities. Henry, indignant on witnessing so many machinations, felt justly irritated at the ingratitude of the duke de Bouillon and the other chiefs, whom he found it impossible to restrain by royal authority; he moreover foresaw all the ills likely to accrue, if some new and signal successes in the war did not impose silence on the discontented and the factious; he was aware how essential it is, in moments of a crisis at the commencement of a reign, to be seconded by good fortune, and that prosperity then becomes a power even superior to glory itself.

The king at a future period remarked, when speaking of the disaffection of the Calvinists, that there were three things the world would never believe, notwithstanding they were true; namely, that Elizabeth of England died a maiden, that the archduke was a great captain, and that the king of France was a good catholic.—*Journal de l'Etoile*, p. 233.

It was, however, necessary to pay troops; money was required, and that main sinew of war was wanting. Under the necessity of dissembling in public, this great prince could only unburthen his soul to Rosny. There, in the bosom of friend-

ship, he unmasked that mind so truly royal, which was merely desirous of war to ensure peace; which only sought to triumph over its enemies in order to pardon them, and establish tranquillity, union, and happiness in France. A fresh reverse, however, was speedily to inflict a new wound, the most unexpected and harrowing to the monarch's feelings.

Hernandés Teillo Porto Carrero, a veteran Spanish officer, a mere dwarf in stature, but possessing dauntless courage, who had already distinguished himself in many actions by his valour and capacity, was governor of Dourlens, seven leagues distant from Amiens. This commander formed the project of taking the latter city by surprise, which he effected with great promptitude and skill. He laid his plan before the archduke Albert, who approving of the same, furnished the troops necessary for the bold undertaking. Porto Carrero, at the head of this force, composing a body of seven thousand infantry and seven hundred horse, made his dispositions during the night of the 10th and 11th of March. He placed a part in ambuscade, and caused the others to enter in the disguises of countrymen conducting carts laden with nuts. While the gates continued open, the waggons were stopped, when a disguised soldier, under pretext of tying up one of the sacks filled with nuts, purposely let it fall immediately opposite the guard-house, upon which a crowd of the inhabitants ran to pick up the contents. The soldiers, then seizing their

arms that were concealed under their disguises, killed some citizens, and put the rest to flight; after which they despatched a summons for the forces concealed near the city to come up immediately, who in consequence entered the place without any resistance. The Spaniards instantly seized the hotel de ville, the ramparts, and, without fighting, became masters of Amiens in less than half an hour; upon which count de Saint Pol, the governor, threw himself into a boat, and, crossing the river, fled to Corbie. Porto Carrero disarmed all the inhabitants, and then proceeded to pillage the city without any massacre or violence being used. The greatest loss experienced by the king on this occasion was a train of artillery with great quantities of ammunition and specie, which had been sent to Amiens, destined as a depôt for the ensuing campaign. While this event took place in Picardy, every thing continued perfectly tranquil in Paris.

The constable de Montmorency was occupied in giving a grand fête on the baptism of his son, at which the king, accompanied by the greater part of his court, attended; while Rosny, who was also present, did not retire until two in the morning. He had been in bed about an hour, when he was suddenly awakened, and summoned to attend on the monarch. "I rose," says Sully in his Memoirs, "and entered the king's chamber, whom I found undressed, walking hastily to and fro, his hands clasped behind him, his head bent downwards, and his countenance displaying

visible marks of the most poignant chagrin. The courtiers were standing in various directions, stuck, as it were, to the walls, not daring to pronounce a word. Henry then approaching me, and pressing my hand with peculiar energy, exclaimed, '*Ah! my friend, what a misfortune! Amiens is taken!*' upon which I stood motionless and confounded like the rest."

De Bury, dwelling on this topic, says the king was completely petrified, and exclaimed, "This is a blow from Heaven: because those poor people refused a small garrison which I was desirous of giving them, they are lost." Upon this, yielding to a few moments' reflection, Henry continued: "I have enacted the king of France long enough; it is time to play the part of king of Navarre;" and then turning to the duchess of Beaufort, who was weeping beside him, he said, "My mistress, we must abandon our pleasures, and mount on horseback, in order to wage a different kind of war." Henry, says Rosny, could not conceive how so strong a place, so well provided, so near to Paris, and the only key to the kingdom on the side of Picardy, could have been captured in a moment, and without any previous news having arrived of the place being threatened. Rosny, at length yielding to cool reflection, felt that in such a moment of apprehension it became necessary to invigorate the public mind and console the monarch; and he, in consequence, made known his having just completed a project which would, without difficulty, not only restore Amiens,

but with it several other places of consequence. In periods of disaster nothing so much reanimates as a hope, however vague it may be, inspired by a friend who is worthy of confidence. Henry, says our author, by such an assurance felt no more than half his misfortune: his coffers, however, were empty; he had not a single regiment fit for actual service; yet large supplies and troops in numbers were essentially necessary, and that too without delay.

Rosny repaired in all haste to his mansion; locked himself up in his study, overcome with trouble and agitation, not knowing how he should be able to perform what he had thus ventured to propose, in order to pacify his master's feelings. He proceeded to consult his various plans; and conned over in his mind all the measures that might be equitably employed to procure a prompt supply of money. After mature reflection, and having calculated, he decided on the following measures, which we think it necessary to detail, as the project was the salvation of France. We shall therefore give it from his Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 131, &c.

"To demand a gratuitous gift of the clergy for two years, obliging them to make the advance; to create a new set of offices by augmenting the old ones; to delay during half a year, the paying arrears of sums borrowed from the partisans under the preceding reign; to augment the price of salt by fifteen sols in every three bushels; to triple the entries, and imposts of the rivers, by a new ap-

praisement; and, as these establishments, for the most part, only held forth the hope of a pecuniary supply, to begin by borrowing twelve hundred thousand livres from the richest individuals at court and in the principal cities of the kingdom, and to ensure repayment, by making over to them such augmentations in the imposts; and for the surplus required in ready money, to compel, by legal proceedings, the last government contractors, who had amassed immense fortunes, to submit to a tax, which should be levied also by way of a loan."

"This plan," says Sully, "was extensive, and I did not intend to put the whole in practice at the same time; but not knowing to what period the war would be protracted, they might be successively resorted to, putting those first in force which were the least oppressive; and in regard to the troops necessary, I conceived that they ought to be collected from those provinces which no longer required forces for their defence."

After five days incessant toil, Rosny carried his scheme to the king, who immediately closeted himself with his minister to examine every item in detail. During this conference, Sully remarked, "that although his plans could not be executed without adding to the wounds France already endured, yet, feeling convinced that his majesty only intended following up the war with vigour in order to secure a more prompt, advantageous, and durable peace; he undertook to affirm, that twelve years of quiet would suffice to

render the whole country flourishing." The scheme was in consequence laid before the council, and after a few discussions adopted, Rosny being charged with seeing the measures speedily executed. The advances required were instantly forthcoming; the first who furnished means with alacrity, being the nobility and the clergy.

At this period, according to Perefixe, Heaven may be said to have visibly assisted the king; who discovered several conspiracies that were carrying on against his person; among others, that of an ecclesiastic, who was an agent of the court of Spain, as it was conjectured, his aim being to assassinate the king. Added to this, many dangerous cabals were fomented in Paris through the medium of gold furnished by Philip the Second, so that every movement of Henry was watched, and a plan formed to carry him off from his palace of Saint Germain en Laye.

The troops requisite for the siege of Amiens marched from all quarters; and Elizabeth of England, in addition, sent four thousand men; so that in a short time nothing was thought of but relieving that city from the Spanish yoke. All being in readiness, Henry set forward in person to ensure the safety of his frontiers. He gave a flying camp of four thousand men and seven hundred horse, to marshal Biron, to invest Amiens on the side of Artois. The œconomy and intelligence of Rosny, whom the king had appointed superintendent of finance, provided so completely for all emergencies, that nothing was

wanting in carrying on the siege; and furnishing provisions in abundance, which he subjected to a very reasonable impost. He also established two hospitals, a precaution, until that period, wholly unknown; and the sick were in consequence so well treated, that the attack on Amiens was called *The siege of Velvet.* The besieged defended themselves with the greatest bravery; and Porto Carrero particularly distinguished himself at the first sortie, which took place on the 12th of May. The Spaniards, on that occasion, assailed the quarters of marshal Biron, and took possession of a fort, from whence, however, Biron dislodged them, and so closely followed them up to the city, that they would never have been able to enter, had not four hundred of their own men rushed out to co-operate and favour their retreat. Two days afterwards Porto Carrero demanded to have a conference with Saint Luc, to whom he was known; when the latter informed him, that the marshal extolled his courage; that he felt interested in the glory of so gallant a soldier, whom a reverse might ruin; that he advised him to capitulate, and undertook to make the propositions. Porto Carrero, whose vanity equalled his courage, replied, "that his reputation was not so brilliant as that of the marshal's, but that he would increase it; that the marshal exposing himself more than any other, would furnish him the opportunity; that he should make him prisoner, and in that manner worthily reply to his courtesy." "Do you believe, then," answered

Saint Luc, "that marshal Biron is to be taken by a sack of nuts?" This raillery disconcerted the phlegm of the Spaniard, and put an end to an interview, that concluded by thus ridiculing the haughty Carrero. Many other sorties took place, in which equal bravery was manifested on either side: when the king learned that the archduke was hastening towards Amiens with his forces, and that Contrera, commissary of the Spanish army, had quitted Douai with a considerable force, in order to reconnoitre the roads. This last-mentioned officer was the individual by whom admiral Villars had been killed in cool blood, after having surrendered himself up a prisoner, as previously mentioned.

On gaining this intelligence, Henry deputed Mayenne to carry on the siege, and marched to encounter the enemy, in company with marshal Biron, attended by six or seven hundred horse, being himself in the van with an hundred chosen gentlemen. On descending a hill, he beheld with astonishment the troops of Contrera issuing from a wood, and they were so near, that the king, instantly deciding on the measures he should adopt, bore down with impetuosity on the enemies, whom he overthrew and dispersed. Contrera, affrighted, fled towards Bapaume, having lost two hundred horse and three stands of colours, one of which was captured by Henry. After this encounter, the king returned to his camp, and followed up the works and the assaults with increased vigour, in order to retake the city

before the arrival of the archduke; and in one of the assaults the besieged lost Porto Carrero, who was killed by a ball discharged from an arquebuse. Henry, on the other hand, had to lament the death of Saint Luc, grand master of the artillery, an officer of the most distinguished talents and tried bravery.

While the monarch and his warriors thus signalized themselves before Amiens by their labours and their intrepidity, the Calvinists, uniformly excited by the duke de Bouillon, who had refused to follow Henry to the siege, continued to hold assemblies, in the hope of forcing the king to issue an edict more favourable than the preceding. Duplessis Mornay and La Trimouille were in this plot, who, being well aware that the king could not terminate the siege without their assistance, conceived that he would be compelled to purchase at that price the aid of which he stood in need. They were, however, in part disappointed; but for a certainty it was during the siege of Amiens that the king gave the Huguenots hopes of the famous edict of Nantes, which was accorded to them the following year. The haughty soul of Henry would not permit him, at a moment when he absolutely stood in need of the Calvinists, to accede to their wishes and positively engage himself; but he gave them hopes, and from such an upright soul they were equivalent to a promise. These intrigues more than once troubled the joy of his successes; nothing, however, could diminish his ardour and activity in forwarding the

siege. "The prince," says Sully, "regarded no military operation as beneath his dignity; and he fulfilled them all with a courage and assiduity that could not fail to inspire energy in the most insensible minds."

Notwithstanding this, the valour and perseverance of the besieged afforded time for the arrival of the archduke, who came to succour Amiens with twenty thousand foot and four thousand horse. Old count de Mansfeld was marshal-general of the camp, whose great age and infirmities preventing him from mounting on horseback, he was transported on a litter: the duke d'Aumale also accompanied the Spanish army. The king being reinforced by succours, led on by the duke de Montpensier, was at the head of twenty thousand foot and eight thousand horse; he was anxious to march and meet his enemies, which was also the advice of Biron, but not that of the duke de Mayenne. "Your intention, sire," said the latter, "is to get possession of Amiens, and not to gain a battle; your intrenchments are very strong, leave your army behind; the Spaniards never risk any thing; they will not undertake to force you." The king, therefore, after mature reflection, resolved to wait the enemy's arrival. The archduke encamped at the abbey of Bettancourt, where he immediately ordered a discharge of his whole artillery, in order to make known to the besieged that succour was at hand.

No sooner had the prince taken his position than the brave officer Lacurée, of whom we have

previously spoken, requested the king with great energy that he might be permitted to reconnoitre the enemy's forces, bringing to his majesty's recollection that this was the fourth time the Spaniards had entered France, and that upon each occasion he had been the first to attack and defeat them. "Do not put yourself in a passion, M. Lacurée," said Henry, "I am well aware of your courage, and I comply with your wishes." Upon this occasion Lacurée rendered himself very conspicuous by many signal acts of bravery, as well as the masterly retreat which he effected in presence of the whole army of Spain.—Vol. 8929 of Manuscripts in the Royal Library at Paris.

Soon after the arrival of the archduke at Bettancourt, he despatched Charles de Longueval count de Bucquoi with a thousand infantry, under the hope of throwing a bridge over the river below Longpré, in order to pass a convoy of ammunition destined for Amiens; but Fervaques, Montigny, Lanoue, and De Vic, caused this enterprise to fail. They arrived with their detachments, charged the Spaniards, whom they cut in pieces, put count de Bucquoi to flight, and took possession of the bridge with the major part of the convoy. This fortunate day was for Henry equivalent to the gaining a battle; for the archduke, having reconnoitred the intrenchments in all directions, found them so strong that he resolved to retire on the 16th of September. The king immediately followed with the greater part of his army, so that the Spaniards were constantly

harassed on their march, but the archduke uniformly avoided coming to battle. "I am not satisfied with Spanish courtesy," said Henry, "because they would not advance a single step to receive me, and have refused with very bad grace the honour which I intended them."

The king, on returning to the camp, summoned the marquis de Montenegro, governor of Amiens, to surrender; and far from being irritated at the long resistance he had experienced, extolled the bravery of his adversaries, and generously granted them an honourable capitulation, that might have been refused from the state to which they were reduced. Besides the conditions obtained by the marquis, he stipulated that the tombs of Porto Carrero and his officers, who had fallen during the siege, should not be disturbed: to this Henry consented, on condition that nothing should be recorded on the monuments that was derogatory to the French nation; upon which account the epitaph on the tomb of Porto Carrero was obliterated, as it reflected an insult on the city of Amiens. The French examined with wonder the cuirass, helmet, and arms of that brave Spaniard, which were so diminutive that they appeared formed only for a child of eight years old. Davila states that Montenegro marched out of the city on the 25th of September; when the king, to do him honour, sent the constable and the duke de Montbazon to meet him, who escorted the marqnis to their sovereign. Henry being then on horseback half a league

from Amiens, accompanied by the princes of the blood and a body of horse; Montenegro alighted, and encircling with his arms the monarch's boot, said in Italian: "*That he surrendered up the city to a soldier king, since it had not pleased his master to send him succours by captains who were soldiers;*" alluding to the archduke, who was a cardinal, though that high ecclesiastical preferment was sometimes dispensed at Rome to persons who were not in priest's orders.

Notwithstanding the vigorous defence of Amiens by the Spaniards, the siege only cost the king six hundred men; but he expended large sums, having been prodigal, in order that the officers and soldiers might be satisfied. This brilliant expedition strengthened the attachment and enthusiasm of the troops, the nobility, and the people; the siege having been alike glorious for the sovereign and the army. Upon the surrender of the city, Henry found himself at the head of the finest army he had yet commanded; the ardour which the troops displayed, and the fresh laurels they had acquired, were the pledges of their future obedience and good faith.

Marshal Biron, *says Perefixe*, behaved most gallantly during the siege of Amiens; wherefore the king, upon his return to Paris, after being publicly welcomed with the honours due to his dignity by the city authorities, pointing to the marshal, thus expressed himself: "*Gentlemen, behold marshal Biron, whom I freely present to my friends as well as my enemies.*"

On referring to the memoirs of that period we find a curious occurrence that happened towards the close of the year, which deserves to be recorded, because it illustrates the character and generosity of the king. A young gentleman named Saint Phal, conceiving that he had cause for complaint against Duplessis Mornay, waylaid him in the street, and, stopping him, demanded an explanation of his conduct. Duplessis answered with kindness, but while speaking received from Saint Phal a violent blow on the head with a stick, which felled him to the earth in a senseless state, when the assailant mounting his horse disappeared. Mornay, on coming to himself, wrote to the king, demanding justice for the attempt at assassination; to which he received the following reply: "Monsieur Duplessis, I feel the greatest displeasure at the outrage you have received, in which I participate as your monarch and your friend. As for the first, I will do justice to you and myself also. If I only enjoyed the second title, there is not one whose sword would be sooner unsheathed, nor who would more freely risk his life than myself. Rest assured that you shall experience the good office of king, master, and friend. With that truth I conclude, praying God to keep you in his holy care."

The king then ordered proceedings to be instituted against Saint Phal as a murderer, when his family obtained his pardon on condition that he would ask forgiveness of the monarch and Du-

plessis, in presence of the principal noblemen of the court. Saint Phal presented himself before the king without his sword, as being unworthy to wear it after such an act of cowardice; but when the prince had granted his forgiveness, he ordered that his sword should be presented to him, saying, that it was more honourable for M. Duplessis to receive satisfaction from a gentleman wearing arms, than one who was deprived of his weapon.

At the commencement of the year 1598, Henry finding himself master of his kingdom, with the exception of Brittany, indulged only one thought, which was the conclusion of a treaty of peace, in order that he might enter into a new career of glory a thousand times preferable to that which he had followed up with so much splendor. The protestants were more than ever anxious to procrastinate the war; but Henry, in this instance, listened only to the dictates of his own heart, and the sage advice of Rosny, so that his wishes for a pacification were not to be shaken. He was well aware that Spain, alike exhausted in men and money, was also anxious for peace; pope Clement the Eighth had already made the first overtures at the commencement of the preceding year; that wise pontiff having despatched to Spain Gonzagues Catalagirone, general of the cordeliers, a man of great talent, who performed the journey under pretext of visiting the monasteries of his order, but, in reality, to persuade Philip the Second to peace: a saintly mission, which

disposed the king of Spain to regard the proposal in a favourable point of view. Catalagirone communicated this intelligence to Henry, then engaged in besieging Amiens, who replied, "*that the thunders which resounded in the environs of Amiens stunned him to such a degree, that he could pay attention to no pacific propositions, until he had made himself master of that city.*" Having received this answer, Catalagirone went to Brussels in order to prepare the archduke for peace; and after the surrender of Amiens the negotiations were resumed. The belligerent powers nominated deputies, who, in the month of February, 1598, assembled in the small town of Vervins to hold conferences respecting a general pacification. Cardinal Alexander de Medicis, chosen by the pope, appeared in the character of an apostolical mediator, who faithfully fulfilled the sacred functions of humanity: his touching eloquence excited universal admiration; he appeased resentments by his evangelical words and maxims; he set boundaries to the excessive claims of ambition; he demanded peace in the name of Heaven and of suffering Europe, and he obtained it. While these famous conferences were held, the king's council debated upon the same question: the major part were in favour of war, and did not stand in need of specious arguments in support of their wishes; but the king continued immoveable, replying to their observations in the following manner: "That if he was anxious for peace, it was not because he dreaded the fatigues

of war; that he felt fully aware it was much easier to buckle on his armour, spur his horse, and deal blows with his sword, than frame laws, observe the conduct of other cabinets, be seated in council to sign state documents, and look after the finances of the realm: he added, that his wish was to secure the repose of Christendom, and ease the burthens of his people; that he knew well, under the actual state of affairs, he might reap great advantages by prolonging the war; but that he considered the tranquillity of his people before every thing, and that to make war only for the love of warfare, being a savage practice against the laws of nature and of christianity, a religious prince ought never to reject peace unless it was altogether disadvantageous or dishonourable." The monarch delivering such sentiments was a warrior, the vanquisher of his enemies, and who in the course of his military career had uniformly tendered peace after every signal victory!

Henry explained himself still more openly in presence of the English ambassador and the States general, who endeavoured to excite him to a continuance of hostilities, offering him considerable succours in men and money. The king, upon this occasion, wisely remarked: "That the consideration of the state of his own kingdom ought to supersede every other idea. He assured the ambassadors, that in refusing the offers of their respective sovereigns, he did not depart from the friendship that united them; and that the peace

which he was on the point of ratifying, would not prevent him from maintaining it." Henry, in order to conclude the important work, commenced at Vervins, named as his plenipotentiaries Brulart de Sillery and Pompone de Bellievre.

During the month of February the king left Paris with a body of troops, and marched towards Brittany, in order to subjugate the ambitious duke de Mercœur; when he captured many places, and among others Dinant. The duke at length being compelled to submit, and finding Henry inflexible, addressed himself secretly to Gabrielle, the king's mistress, at that period marchioness of Monçeau, who promised to procure for him honourable and advantageous conditions, provided he would give his daughter in marriage to Cæsar, the eldest son whom she had borne to the king.

The duke did not absolutely refuse this proposal, owing to the extreme embarrassment of his affairs; but his wife Mary of Luxembourg, being a most haughty woman, rejected the idea altogether. Mercœur, who flattered himself that the duchess, who was a woman of talent, might prevail on the monarch to grant him terms, despatched his wife to the prince, in order to supplicate that his majesty would procure for their daughter an establishment with some lord of the court whom his majesty should think fit to nominate. The duke imagined that this proposition would suffice to engage Gabrielle to interest herself in his favour with her royal lover.

The pride, however, of the duchess de Mercœur was well known to the king's mistress, who therefore not only refrained from exerting her good offices, but determined to make the duchess sensible that without her intercession the duke would continue exposed to all the monarch's severity.

The duchess de Mercœur therefore, on presenting herself at the gate of the city of Angers, at which the court then resided, was refused admittance in such a cavalier manner, that she was forced to retire to Pont de Cé. This humiliation was productive of very serious reflections; and the result was a compliance with the wishes of Gabrielle, who was made acquainted with the same. Henry, charmed at being able to satisfy his mistress, and at the same time exert his accustomed clemency, granted Mercœur very advantageous conditions. The daughter of this nobleman, only six years of age, was in consequence affianced to the infant Cæsar, natural son of Gabrielle, then four years old, and who in consequence had settled upon him the duchy of Vendome.

In the month of April Henry ratified, in favour of the protestants, the famous edict of Nantes; which was the work of four very experienced men, namely, Schomberg, Jeanin, De Thou, and Colignon, who had by his majesty's order been occupied two years in completing their task. This edict was, to all appearance, grounded on that of Poitiers, and the conventions of Bergerac and Fleix, to which many of its clauses bear a

strong resemblance; the king, however, as in ancient edicts, gave up certain places of safety, and engaged to support the garrisons ceded to the Calvinists at his own expense. Henry, situated as he then was, found himself compelled to grant this edict; but from motives of delicacy he did not make it public until after the departure of the pope's legate, which occurred in 1599.

These important affairs had not slackened the activity of the conferences held at Vervins; and the articles of peace were signed on the 2d of May, 1598. Of all the great negotiators of that time Sillery had the glory of contributing most to the conclusion of that important treaty. Upon the king's ratifying the same, he exclaimed: "*I have just performed greater exploits by one dash of the pen, than I could have accomplished during a long war, aided by the best swords in my kingdom.*" According to the opinions of the ablest politicians of that day, the peace of Vervins was highly beneficial to France; as the king of Spain surrendered up Calais and all the places he possessed in Picardy, with the port of Blavet in Brittany.

The duke of Savoy was comprised in the treaty, provided he restored the city of Barre, and submitted to the arbitration of the pope on the subject of the marquisate of Saluces, which the duke had invaded towards the close of the reign of Henry the Third.

As soon as the peace was concluded, it was first published at Nantes, at which city the king then was, and subsequently proclaimed in all the

towns throughout the kingdom: an event that excited the most enthusiastic demonstrations of joy. Previous to quitting Brittany, Henry established order and tranquillity throughout the province; the states which he had purposely assembled to act in concert with them, being anxious to testify their acknowledgments, offered him gratuitously the sum of twelve thousand livres, which proved of great utility under the then state of the royal finances.

Henry's journey from Nantes to Paris was nothing but one triumphal march, the most glorious that a monarch could desire to witness. The people, after having experienced all the horrors of anarchy, tyranny, and war, precipitated themselves in crowds to meet him, anxious to behold their legitimate prince, who presented himself like a parent after a long absence returning to re-establish union and tranquillity in his disconsolate family; nothing resounded but benedictions on the magnanimous monarch, who had only effected the conquest of his kingdom to re-establish justice and peace. Henry received these demonstrations of gratitude and love with marks of affection and tenderness; but how sensibly must his soul have been touched on finding at every town where he arrived afflicting proofs of the cruel ravages of war: mansions abandoned, villages void of population, and tracts of land wholly uncultivated! As he scrupulously examined every object with a paternal eye, he one day observed a field that was in a high state

of cultivation, and became anxious to know the name of the countryman whom the misfortunes of the times had not discouraged; which he committed to paper, and shortly after remitted him an ear of corn formed of gold, desiring that he would uniformly wear it fastened to his cap.

CHAPTER XVI.

Amours of princess Catherine, and her marriage with the duke of Bar.—Separation from that prince.—Letter of Henry to the marchioness of Beaufort.—Intrigues of the marchioness to forward her views on the throne of France.—Reconciliation of the marchioness of Beaufort and the princess of Guise.—The king nearly discovers the intrigue of his mistress with Bellegarde.—Marriage of that nobleman to Honoré de Beuil.—Account of the beautiful Louisa de Budos.—Birth of Catherine Henrietta—Divorce of the marchioness of Beaufort from the lord de Liancourt.—Birth of Alexander de Vendome, afterwards grand prior of France.—Curious manifesto of Henry the Fourth, containing the reasons adduced for his claiming a divorce from his wife queen Margaret.—Henry urges the court of Rome to sanction his divorce, in order that he may espouse his mistress.—Letter of the duchess of Beaufort to the king, and Henry's answer.—Rosny averse to the king's marriage with the duchess.—Interview between Henry, Rosny, and the duchess of Beaufort.—The king acquaints Rosny with his intention to marry Gabrielle.—Stern conduct of the minister, who succeeds in dissuading his master.

We shall now renew the narrative of the amours of Henry and his court, resuming that subject from the period of Châtel's attempt to assassinate the king, and the expulsion of the Jesuits, at which epoch we closed the last chapter upon such amatory subjects.

The marchioness of Beaufort, greatly alarmed at the attempt of Châtel, and fearful lest some bigoted enthusiast should, by a single blow, overturn all her ambitious hopes, laboured incessantly in order to dispose Henry to a marriage, which was so near her heart. Two very great obstacles, however, opposed themselves to this measure: the necessity of the king's procuring a divorce from his wife Margaret, as well as her own separation from M. de Liancourt. As the former appeared most difficult, she began her operations in that direction, and it being in the first instance essentially necessary to procure the acquiescence of queen Margaret, Gabrielle caused proposals to be made to her on that head; but the ministers employed to negotiate returned little satisfied with the result of their mission. The queen could not so easily make up her mind to relinquish a station of which she was mistress, to behold it in the possession of a female so inferior in rank to her own. The marchioness was sensibly affected at this ill success; but she consoled herself with Bellegarde, who became more passionately fond of her than ever, and who in consequence redoubled his caresses and assiduities.

Madame, the king's sister, and the duke of Guise no longer made a secret of their loves; and although Bellegarde had renewed his affections for madame de Beaufort, he nevertheless continued to attend upon mademoiselle de Guise. His visits to the latter became so frequent, that

the brother of the princess conceived his attentions too apparent; in consequence of which he accused Bellegarde of temerity, although he was no less bold in showing his attachment to the sister of a monarch. The duke, however, explained himself to the princess, his sister, in such an authoritative and disobliging manner, that Bellegarde was under the necessity of devising means that would put it out of the power of the duke of Guise to interfere in his amours. In consequence of this resolution, Bellegarde intimated to the duke of Nevers, who could refuse him nothing, that the advances of the prince of Guise to madame Catherine, the king's sister, without the acquiescence of foreign powers, was an insult to their authority; and so well did Bellegarde follow up his machinations, that he caused the duke of Guise to be sent into Provence under the pretext of his governing that territory. This appointment was demanded by the marchioness of Beaufort, who obtained it without difficulty, unconscious that she thus enabled Bellegarde to have uninterrupted intercourse with her rival the princess of Guise, whose brother received such pressing orders that he was compelled to set forward for Provence, having scarcely time allowed him to bid farewell to the king's sister.

Madame Câtherine was in complete despair at the loss of her lover, and being unconscious from whence the blow came, she suspected every one; and in consequence set every engine at work for

the purpose of discovering her enemies. Being unable to divine the truth, she attributed every thing to her cruel destiny, and at length consoled herself by a conquest she made of John Louis de Nogaret de la Valette, duke d'Epernon, neither so youthful, handsome, or well made as the duke of Guise. Catherine was nevertheless satisfied, and followed up her gallantries, which continued until she became the wife of the duke of Bar, son of Charles duke of Lorraine, which was concluded at Monçeaux, an estate that had been given by Henry to madame de Beaufort. These nuptials had been postponed for two years on account of various impediments that arose on the subject of religion. Both parties were alike dissatisfied in being sacrificed by their relatives against their consciences, owing to affairs of state. It was on this account their union was far from happy; for, six months after the marriage the duke, a very bigoted prince, performed a journey to Rome *incognito*, to request papal absolution and a dispensation for the future; the whole being founded upon ridiculous scruples infused into his mind by a confessor who had alarmed his conscience. The pope refused his dispensation, but accorded him absolution, provided he never again cohabited with Catherine of Navarre, whom he was ordered to repudiate in case she did not embrace the catholic persuasion. The priest-ridden duke was such a zealot and so simple as to promise acquiescence with all that was required, provided he was secretly received

into the bosom of the church until the same could be announced publicly; and in consequence the unfortunate princess remained in a state of widowhood in the very zenith of her marriage.

Ere we quit Monceaux, it will not be unnecessary to speak of a malady that attacked the king very shortly after the nuptials of his sister. Henry had begun to follow a certain diet, when he suddenly became attacked by a retention of urine, accompanied by a violent fever and great nauseas at the heart. This illness was very violent, insomuch that the king's life was despaired of; he, however, recovered, and in a few days afterwards pursued his accustomed exercises. The marchioness of Beaufort, who had, as it were, beheld herself on the brink of a precipice, redoubled her importunities in regard to marriage; which were productive of the greater effect, in consequence of the attentions she had displayed during his indisposition, as they seemed to appeal to his conscience for the performance of his word. Henry was, in consequence, resolved to comply; and, in fact, several historians of that period agree that, had it not been for the disparity in their births, the mistress was by no means unworthy of the honour intended her.

The solemnity of the nuptials of madame Catherine with the duke of Bar being celebrated, that princess went shortly after to reside in the territory of her husband. Her departure was particularly gratifying to the marchioness of Beaufort, who was in consequence eased of the

chagrin she had experienced in being compelled to show a deference to the birth rather than to the person of a princess, who frequently received her with very ill grace.

It was at this period the duke de Mayenne headed the miserable remains of the exhausted League; the Spaniards having besieged Cambrai, when the king proceeded to succour that important place, which, as we have previously stated, fell into the enemy's hands previous to his arrival. To avenge himself for that loss, Henry laid siege to La Fère, upon which occasion he wrote the following letter to his mistress:—

"My *menon*," (a familiar term of affection,) "I received yours which you wrote through the medium of the advocate Courvadon. If any thing is done for him, it will be through your intervention: I speak with uncertainty, because in such cases I take the advice of the chancellor, who is more experienced than myself. In respect to the nuptials of La Bourdaisiere, if the affair had terminated in death, I should have been the homicide. I am always in pain concerning Vitry: the country is far more cheerful than the city; and you will find it so when we come together. Good day, my every thing; I kiss thee a million times."

Henry, on the ensuing day, set forward to join his mistress, leaving the care of the siege to his generals; but he returned a few days afterwards accompanied by the duke de Mayenne, with whom he was then on friendly terms. Their

reconciliation had been expedited by the marchioness of Beaufort, who, being generous by nature, was desirous of seeing the monarch and the duke friends, and, as she aspired to become queen, Gabrielle stood in need of Mayenne, through whose intervention she hoped to bring about the king's divorce. In addition to this, madame Beaufort, in the event of the king's affections undergoing a change, was anxious to ensure a powerful partisan, and as she could hope for nothing from the princes of the blood or the Huguenots, who had no cause to love her, she used every effort to ingratiate herself and secure the friendship of Mayenne.

The hardy soldier having once assumed a boldness of speech in regard to the actions of his sovereign, conceives he is entitled to deliver his sentiments upon every occasion, particularly when he finds himself supported by persons of high consideration. Of this Cambrai afforded an instance, who was insolent to his prince on the subject of his mistress; which became the more insupportable, as, from existing circumstances, the monarch found himself obliged to yield. Amiens having been recently surprised by the Spaniards, Henry, accompanied by his court, set forward in order to invest that city, the marchioness of Beaufort being in his company, who took up her quarters near those of the king. The soldiers, who attributed every ill success to the presence of that cherished female, murmured aloud at her coming. Even marshal Biron, with-

out considering how dangerous it is to blame the pleasures of a prince, took the liberty of descanting on his weakness, uttering such pointed reproaches that his majesty, unable, or not daring to repress the insolent conduct of Cambrai or the marshal, was under the necessity of sending his mistress away.

We have before stated that the departure of princess Catherine was very satisfactory to madame Beaufort; and Bellegarde knew well how to reap advantage from the good humour of the marchioness, by disposing her to receive the princess of Guise into her good graces. As he was fearful lest the love he entertained for the latter should ultimately deprive him of the affections of the marchioness, he adopted the plan of their reconciliation. That princess, who was well aware of the advantages which might accrue to her lover from a renewal of friendship with the marchioness, through whose means every court favour was derived, made all the necessary advances. In consequence of this, those two rivals became on a sudden united in the firmest bonds of amity, being always seen together, even affecting to dress in the same manner and decorate their persons with similar jewels and ornaments. Henry became the dupe of this reconciliation, and felt convinced that Bellegarde carried on no private intercourse with the marchioness. An unexpected accident, however, occurred to poison his tranquillity and render him the slave of all his former jealousy. Madame Beaufort

had received a billet from Bellegarde, which La Rousse left through negligence on his mistress's toilet. The king, who was unceasing in his attentions to madame de Beaufort, despatched Beringhen, his first *valet-de-chambre*, to the apartments of the marchioness at a very early hour to inquire after her health. Beringhen being shown into the dressing-room, in order to wait for an answer, cast his eyes upon the note, which he took up and conveyed to the king. Henry, who uniformly entertained a good opinion of all those he loved, knew not what to conjecture, and in consequence directed Beringhen to keep a strict watch upon the movements of his mistress and Bellegarde. Beringhen, faithful to his employer, executed the commission so well, that he watched Bellegarde into the chamber of the marchioness; when he immediately made the circumstance known to the king; who then commanded him to speed to Charles de Choiseul, marquis of Pralin, captain of his guards, with orders for the latter to kill Bellegarde in the arms of his faithless mistress.

Pralin, who was greatly attached to the two lovers, was in despair on receiving such a command, and would have forfeited any thing to avoid the fatal commission; but there was not even the means of testifying such a desire. He consequently proceeded to follow his instructions, but purposely conducted himself in such a manner as to afford the guilty party an opportunity to escape. In passing the guard-room, he

ordered five or six soldiers to follow him; but made so much noise, and proceeded by such a circuitous route, that on entering he only found madame de Beaufort, whom he made acquainted with the nature of his mission. The marchioness immediately perceived that Pralin had determined not to surprise her, upon which she returned thanks, and promised to requite him for the signal service he had rendered her: neither did madame de Beaufort forget her word, since, in conjunction with the princess of Guise, equally interested with the marchioness in preserving Bellegarde, Pralin shortly after acquired the rank of marshal, and became one of the most powerful men at court. Madame de Beaufort, however, like an expert courtesan, did not suffer this affair to pass over in silence, but reproached the king for his unjust surmises, and the little reliance there was in placing confidence in his promises or friendship. In his own justification Henry then produced the note which he had received from Beringhen; when she protested her ignorance as to its contents, solemnly declaring she had never perused it; in short, the marchioness found it no very difficult matter to justify herself, as her lover was fully disposed to credit her innocence, and would have been truly sorry to be convinced to the contrary. The king's mind, however, was not fully satisfied; the letter made him uneasy, and from time to time threw a cloud of mistrust over him which he could not dissipate. In fine, to lull his jealousies, it became necessary that

madame de Beaufort should consent to the dismissal of Bellegarde, who received orders to retire from court, and not return until he should be married, and present himself accompanied by his bride.

The duke obeyed his master's commands, and in order that he might not be banished for any length of time from the vortex of pleasures, espoused Anne de Beuil, daughter of Honoré de Beuil, lord of Fontaine, killed at the siege of Malo, after that city had declared itself for the League. Bellegarde returned to Paris with his duchess, where he found a new beauty, who had just then arrived at court, being Louisa de Budos, daughter of James de Budos, viscount de Portes, and Catherine de Clermont. This lovely woman, recently married to the constable de Montmorenci, was the terror of all the ladies of gallantry at court; and in consequence there were few lovers whose fidelity was such as to resist her charms; but she possessed so much pride as to contemplate with equal disdain the jealousy of her own sex and the love of the courtly tribe. Henry was no less struck with the fascinations of this beauty, to whom he paid frequent visits, without troubling himself concerning the chagrin he might thereby cause his mistress the marchioness de Beaufort. Madame de Montmorenci, as is customary with her sex, felt gratified at the pain experienced by the marchioness; and having no intention of profiting by his majesty's assiduities, she amused herself upon the subject

with marshal Biron, to whom she had yielded up her affections. This lady, however, did not long enjoy either the advantages of her beauty or the malignant pleasure she experienced in mortifying madame de Beaufort; as she soon after died in childbed, whereby Henry's mistress was relieved from the terrors inspired by such a powerful rival. The duchess of Montmorenci left two children very young; the eldest, Henry, second of that name, afterwards peer and marshal of France, beheaded at Toulouse in 1632; the other, Charlotte Margaret de Montmorenci, who inherited all the charms of her mother, and married Henry de Bourbon, first prince of the blood. This lady subsequently created more noise than her mother, and set the whole court in a flame, as will appear in the sequel.

While these events took place, madame de Beaufort was brought to bed of Catherine Henrietta, who in 1619 espoused Charles de Lorraine, duke d'Elbœuf. After the birth of this daughter, the marchioness caused her marriage with the lord de Liancourt to be annulled; subsequent to which she gave birth to Alexander de Vendome, commonly called grand prior of France, who died a prisoner in the castle of Vincennes, under the reign of Louis the Thirteenth, that monarch having ordered his imprisonment. Madame de Beaufort being at liberty by the dissolution of her marriage, directed all her thoughts and industry in order to place the crown upon her head. Henry, more enamoured than ever, and

gratified with the progeny she produced him, did all in his power to satisfy her wishes; and so determined was he on this head, as to banish from the court Nicholas de Neuville, lord of Villeroi, secretary of state, for having taken the liberty, as a good and faithful subject, of showing the inconveniences to which he would expose himself by forming such an alliance.

As a proof of Henry's attachment to his mistress, the *Journal de l'Etoile* says, that "he would traverse the city of Paris with that lady beside him; conduct her in his hunting-excursions, and caress her in presence of every body:" in addition to which, the style of his letters to Gabrielle affords sufficient proofs of the astonishing empire she had acquired over his feelings.

Henry fallaciously imagined that it would not be difficult to prevail on queen Margaret to consent to a divorce; so that nothing remained but the approbation of the see of Rome, whither he despatched Nicholas Brulard, lord de Sillery, to whom he gave the title of ambassador extraordinary, that nobleman being then president of the parliament of Paris. Sillery, a very able minister, independent of the zeal he felt in respect to the interests of his master, was partly indebted for his fortune to the marchioness of Beaufort, who for the purpose of encouraging him to render her this essential service, had promised to procure for him the dignity of chancellor; with which she in fact invested him, without considering the interests of Chiverny,

the intimate friend of her sister, for whom she conceived enough had been done in her having obtained a cardinal's hat for his eldest son.

Before we proceed to speak of the success attending this negotiation, it may not be amiss to make known the reasons adduced by Henry for claiming a dissolution of marriage from his queen; for which purpose we cannot do better than insert the king's manifesto, a singularly curious and interesting document, displaying the manners of those times, never before published in this country; wherein the king depicts Margaret in her true colours, and so amply details the unbridled licentiousness of her conduct, that it must be allowed her flagrant amours, and vices of every description, were a just plea for Henry's requiring the divorce in question.

Manifesto of Henry the Fourth on the subject of his Divorce from Margaret de Valois.

"TYRANTS, and those who care little about making themselves detested provided they can be feared, are in the habit of saying that kings who frame laws are above the law, and that their will should regulate every thing. I abhor so tyrannical a maxim: he who enacts laws should by his own example cause them to be observed; for the greater a prince is, the more should he display his equity. His true glory centres in the docility and affection of his people. It is true, I have been compelled to conquer by force of arms that kingdom which was my right by

birth; but the whole universe is witness that I have pardoned more enemies than avenged outrages. The disturbers of the tranquillity of the state, equally with my personal enemies, have experienced the effects of my clemency. Notwithstanding this, I am given to understand that not only strangers, but even certain Frenchmen, disloyal to my service, complain that after twenty-eight years marriage I should be separated from the sister of my kingly predecessors under the plea of relationship that exists between us. Some call me a voluptuary, others an atheist, and the whole deem me ungrateful. I did believe that I should have been spared the mortification of exposing the most painful part of my life; which, for my personal quiet, I had consigned to eternal silence. But since my honour is concerned, and cruel necessity obliges me for my justification to recur to events so disagreeable, I am willing to enlighten those who have not suffered themselves to be deceived, and at the same time confound the malice of my hidden enemies, by exposing to the eyes of the world the real sources for the divorce which I seek to obtain. In the rank in which God has placed me, it is not sufficient that my life should appear without reproach, I must even avoid its being suspected, and draw aside the curtain beneath which I had hoped to conceal the disorders of my family.

"It is said that Heaven advertises those born to command others respecting the misfortunes

that await them. If the blood that rained upon Rome before the battle of Cannæ was a presage of the loss the republic was doomed to experience, that which was shed on the day of my nuptials was equally a bitter presage of the misfortunes this fatal union was to cause me. I did not take advantage of the evil augury; neither did I make any reflection on the words of Charles the Ninth, brother of that dissolute woman, who knew her more intimately than I did, and laughingly remarked, '*That he did not only give his Margot for wife of the king of Navarre, but to all the Huguenots of his kingdom.*' I attached to this a sense widely different from his, and conceived that he looked upon her as a link, which was in future to attach all the Huguenots more inviolably to his service. Time has but too fatally developed to me the mystery of that oracle. I had so little consulted the mind of the princess as to be unaware that from eleven years of age she had proved susceptible of love, and that Entragues and Charrins proclaimed aloud they had at so early a period enjoyed her first favours. I know not whether the generous emulation of disputing that conquest or excess of pleasure urged Entragues too far in the career of love; but it is a fact that her concupiscence brought him to the brink of the grave, and compelled him to abandon his amour and take a wife less beautiful, but more moderate and discreet.

"The prince of Martigues next appeared to fill the place of Entragues; for having dismissed

Charrins, whom she did not love, the former became monarch of her heart. This prince, who was sufficiently vain by nature, maintained so little secrecy as to his good fortune, that their intrigue, long known at court, became public throughout the army, and, spreading from one to another, afforded a rich vein of pleasantry for all the infantry corps of which Martigues was the colonel. That indiscreet lover upon the most perilous occasions wore an embroidered scarf, and conveyed with him a little dog given by his mistress, which he preserved till his death as tokens of her affection. The loss of this favourite made her shed tears, which the king strove to assuage by offering her in marriage to the king of Portugal; but the duke of Guise, who was then occupied in forming the League, and who pretended, in seeking to espouse her, that he should give some colour to his unjust and ambitious designs, prevented that union, through the means of his uncle the cardinal of Lorraine, who had been despatched to Spain to condole with his catholic majesty on the death of his spouse Elizabeth of France. The duke, however, gained the heart of the princess through the good offices of madame de Carnavalet. To her other enormities, however, she added that of incest, having criminal intercourse with her brothers the dukes of Anjou and Alençon, who prevented her connexion with the duke of Guise. It was in this manner she had conducted herself previous to our nuptials; it may therefore be conceived

whether or not I behaved myself as a man by obtaining the ring at the first course.

"No sooner had our espousals been solemnized than all those who had sought her alliance retired, obliging her by their absence to content herself with gallantries that were less public. Her good friend the duchess of Nevers, who was enamoured of Coconas, persuaded her to favour La Molle, the confidant of their intrigue, in order to spare him the chagrin of merely holding the cloaks while they continued shut up together. These lovers did not long enjoy their amours, for being found accomplices in a conspiracy with marshals Montmorenci and De Cossé, they concluded by leaving their heads upon a scaffold. Those charitable ladies did not, however, permit their sad remains to continue for any length of time exposed to public view, proceeding in person to bear away the heads, which they deposited in their carriage, and then conveyed them to the chapel of Saint Martin above Montmartre; where, having bathed them with tears, they interred them with their own hands.

"The queen was so affected by the tragic death of La Molle, that she took pity on Saint Luc, who, in order to console her, frequently repaired by night to Nerac disguised in various ways; but, as he disappeared during the day, his absence created her chagrin. In order, therefore, to fill up that vacuum, she had recourse to Bussi; but he proved deficient, for it is said he was not so brave in dirty affairs as at the head of a flying

camp, being incommoded by a cholic, which usually seized him upon certain nameless occasions.

" This variety of personages, however, did not prevent her from lending a favourable ear to the duke de Mayenne, a jolly companion, stout, fat, and voluptuous; in a word, possessing an appetite equally as good and as salacious as her own. This similarity of temperaments rendered their connexion rather durable, notwithstanding the influence of madame de Vitry, who did all in her power to break off the intrigue. The duke, however, had once the imprudence to write to the latter, stating that he preferred the sun to the moon; by which he intended to say, in good French, madame de Vitry to the queen of Navarre, because my very chaste wife used to have herself denominated Diana. Peace, however, was concluded, and the moon eclipsed the sun.

" This sacrifice did not cure Diana of her inconstancy: nor, indeed, was it just that she should remain faithful to a man who quitted her to carry on war against a party which honour and duty should have prompted him to embrace. The Huguenots would equally have had cause for complaint, had she found no man among them capable of filling the duke's place for a few days. Viscount de Turenne was the first who placed himself in the ranks; he was of good stature, possessed a handsome countenance, and his exterior altogether fascinated her in the first instance; she did not, however, experience in

private all that had been promised by the exterior in public; and on this account he received his dismissal, because, according to her expression, he resembled empty clouds, which have nothing to charm but their appearance. This despairing lover wished to bury himself in some unknown land, in which case I know not what might have happened to our party, had I not compelled her to recall him. It was, however, with infinite pain she acquiesced, because her vanity had made her hope that the viscount would have shared the fate of Iphis the lover of Anaxarete; and she was consequently much chagrined to find herself robbed of the glory of having caused a meritorious man to hang himself.

"She made me pay dearly for this complaisance; for I was compelled to suffer the passion she had conceived for Clermont d'Amboise, who frequently met her undressed at the door of her apartment, while at night, in order that she might have time to go to bed, I played or walked about my chamber with my officers. No man could certainly prove more complaisant; and I well know several coquettes who would be glad to purchase such a husband at any price. However, that no one may accuse me of giving publicity to such singular morality, in order to tame jealous husbands, and take advantage of their docility, I will now explain the reasons which compelled me to adopt such a line of conduct. I was a king without kingdom; the leader of a party which I was forced to maintain, generally

speaking, without troops, or money to procure them; and when I beheld the storm ready to burst over me, to appease it, I had no other means left but submission. This good lady, such as she is, did not prove useless; and in return for my civility, she calmed her mother and brothers who were acrimonious against me. In another point of view, her beauty attracted many brave captains, who, by her uniform compliance with their desires, continued in my service; as she would have imagined that an injury was done to the interests of our party, had she discarded any one from an excess of severity. On this account it may be judged whether I had not good reason to be careful of her. Notwithstanding this, some became objects of her raillery, and I was honoured by her confiding to me their ridiculous passions. That old fool Pibrac was among the number: love made him her chancellor, and he solicited that charge to enjoy the privilege of writing to her tender billets dictated by his passion, with which she, perfidious creature, amused herself with me in private. She caused her horoscope to be drawn out, by which it was predicted to her that from the 21st to the 28th of March, 1580, she would die by my hand, and that I should sacrifice her to my outraged honour: but my prudence, or the hope I entertained of one day separating myself from her, rendered the prediction vain, and corrected the malignity of her star. We continued to live as before; I was uniformly indulgent, and she as constantly volup-

tuous. She even sought after new ragouts to indulge her taste, by placing on her bed sheets of black taffety, and lighting her apartment with upwards of a thousand wax tapers. It was at this period she became fecund, and brought forth the fruit of her libertinism, which, reared under a fictitious name, promises at a future period to excel her parent, being brought up under such happy auspices. These refinements had rendered her so delicate that she could no longer bear my presence. When, returning from the chase with visage dusty and bathed with perspiration, I went to repose beside her, she, as soon as I was gone forth, caused the sheets to be changed, though I had frequently lain down for a quarter of an hour at most. Not only did she despise my person, but even my birth, which she conceived very inferior to her own, and could not refrain from expressing herself to that effect to my relatives. I one day entreated that she would have the goodness to permit madame de Thoiras, distantly related to me, to eat at her table; upon which she replied, that it would previously be requisite I should consent that the lady in question should wash her feet in a basin of water; meaning thereby, that she was so poor as to be ranked among the number of those chosen to perform the Last Supper; as if she had not herself at Florence a hundred merchants more nearly related to her by twenty degrees, than any one allied to the illustrious houses of Foix and Albret were to that of Bourbon. However, many ad-

ventures subsequently occurred which tended much to humiliate her pride.

"After having been disgracefully driven from Paris, and every thing undergoing examination, even to her litter, for the purpose of ascertaining who were her companions, and whether mesdames de Duras and de Bethune, secretaries of her cabinet, who had been prohibited from following her, were not of the party, she became more cautious, fearful of being treated with greater ignominy. As her discretion, however, was merely forced, it continued no longer than the remembrance of the insult; and she therefore soon fell into her former dissolute practices, and kept no terms whatsoever. She left me without giving any notice, and repaired to Agen, a town opposed to her party, where she held her gallant court, and continued her debaucheries more at her ease. Her infamous proceedings at length so greatly scandalized the inhabitants of the town, that they drove her out in disgrace, and compelled her to retire with such precipitancy that she had scarcely time to mount the horse in order to ride behind her lover. Her women, who could not procure sufficient palfreys on hire, followed as they could, some without their masks, others without aprons, several half naked, and the whole troop in so much disorder, that they might rather have passed for a band of Egyptians, than the ladies of honour of a great queen. They were also accompanied by several officers, some on horseback unbooted, and others on foot,

under the orders of Lignerac, who conducted them to Carlat in the mountains of Auvergne, where Marcé, his brother, was governor; a very strong hold, but more resembling a den of robbers than a spot fit to receive a princess, the daughter, sister, and wife of a king.

"I scarcely know how to recapitulate such a train of indignities, particularly when I call to mind that the page of history never fails to revive the deeds of the great, however careful we may be to conceal them. What disgrace to think that, after twenty centuries, one less vicious will learn that the present has produced such a monster of libertinism, who, feeling no respect for the blood royal, from which she was descended, has excelled in all those debaucheries so famous in the annals of antiquity.

"I had hoped previous to this last adventure, that her natural inconstancy of temper would disgust her from a depravity where she had experienced no opposition; since nothing is so calculated to excite desire, as the obstacles that present themselves; and that by way of recompense for the indulgent manner in which I had conducted myself as regards her infidelities, she would cease to dishonour me; experience has, however, taught me that when vice has once taken root, the most imperious duties are sacrificed without remorse. This determined obstinacy in violating with so much scandal, all the rights of the marriage-bed, at length determined me to break the tie which united us. The Al-

mighty, through whose grace I was delivered from this depraved woman, well knows how desirous I was that the secret reasons for our divorce should have been explained in terms less harsh. That same power is a witness that it is with regret, and only from compulsion, that I make known these facts, which I would fain consign to an eternal oblivion; but this declaration is due to my honour, to shield me from the shafts of calumny and public discontents; and the more so, as I shall state nothing that is not known to the whole of France.

"The king her brother, having learned her flight, and the complaints I uttered against her, wrote to me, stating, that had I believed him, and on quitting Paris treated his sister as she deserved, I should have spared myself so much pain, and not have had my mind bewildered with her enormities. He even stated aloud when at dinner, that the queen of Navarre had not been satisfied with prostituting herself to the cadets of Gascony, but that she journeyed to find the muleteers and the tinkers of Auvergne. This prediction was but too true, as she had no delicacy in the choice of her favourites after her arrival at Carlat, where she continued for a length of time, not only deprived of a state bed, but even in want of a shift. As she was no lover of abstinence, and not knowing to what saint she ought to devote herself, she directed her thoughts towards her man cook, and permitted him the enjoyment of her favours, until the arrival of

Duras, who had been despatched to Spain for money, although the wife of that envoy daily boasted to the queen the constancy and fidelity of her husband, to prevent her, if possible, from entering into such a disgraceful intrigue. It is true the poverty and wretched state of the queen had caused her other lovers to desert her, and that Saint Vincent had returned home to avoid the great expenditure which he should be compelled to make, had he undertaken to provide for all the household.

"The queen of Navarre was too delicate to continue her affections for any length of time for a lover who always smelt of grease; but as it was absolutely requisite she should possess one, the choice fell upon her squire Aubiac, who could never have hoped, with his red hair, freckled skin, and rubicund nose, to become the lover of a princess of France. Notwithstanding this, he succeeded; so that madame de Marcé, who chanced one morning to present herself too early, surprised the lovers in bed. This officious conduct cost Marcé the life of her husband, whom the queen adroitly got rid of by a prepared beverage, after the manner of her mother's country. She imagined, on poisoning the governor, that it would be no difficult matter, with the assistance of troops which Rosas, cousin of Aubiac, was raising in Gascony, to become mistress of the place, and drive out those who had generously received her at the period of her disgrace; but she was

deceived, reaping no benefit whatsoever from her base treachery.

"Duras, on his return from Spain, chagrined on finding that another had usurped his place, disbursed no money, saying, he had expended in perfumed gloves, horses, and other curiosities of the country, from whence he arrived, the supplies which this new Amazon had destined for carrying on the war. In addition to this, the plan of drawing forces from Gascony having been discovered, the guard was reinforced, and she was advised to seek another resting-place; with which she instantly complied, fearful of encountering some new insults. She therefore left Carlat with the same equipage, and in similar disorder to that which had characterised her arrival, and proceeded with as much expedition as the nature of her circumstances would admit, to a mansion belonging to her mother Catherine de Medicis. Scarcely had she set foot to ground, when she was attacked by the marquis de Cavillac, who had been deputed by the king for that purpose. She was there captured with her lover, who was found concealed under a load of filth, beardless, and without any hair, she having with her own hands deprived him of both for the purpose of concealment. Margaret, however, had not resolved to save him in this manner, until after vainly attempting to inspire him with courage, and exhorted him to avoid by death the ignominy that awaited him; offering to shew him the ex-

ample, if he had sufficient resolution to follow it. I do not doubt but those who may peruse this manifesto will be touched with compassion, when they learn the dire extremities to which a princess was reduced, the worthless offspring of those famous heroes who had gloriously extended the boundaries of France and humbled the pride of her neighbours. I feel equal chagrin on beholding their memories so offended, and their reputation tarnished by this foe to virtue; we must, however, be consoled, since there is not a race, however illustrious it may be, which has not displayed some defective point; nor any source so pure, but after a long course its crystal waters will be contaminated by mud. Let us conclude this afflicting moral lesson; and examine the manner in which she extricated herself from the difficulties into which she was thrown.

"Her manners were so flattering that it was difficult to defend one-self when she became anxious to exert them. She made so many advances to Cavillac, that he could not escape becoming sensible of them; he preferred a fleeting gratification to the duty which he owed his master, and suffered himself to be captured by her whom he had made prisoner; he sacrificed the interest of his fortunes to the blandishments of love; and permitting himself to be blinded by jealousy, ordered Aubiac to be tried by Lugoli. That unfortunate wretch, who was guilty of no other crime than yielding like himself to the caresses of this Circé, was condemned, and hung at Aigueperce,

and displayed to the last so much constancy towards his faithless mistress, that, instead of endeavouring to save himself, he, to the last moment of his existence, continued kissing a sleeve of blue velvet, the only remnant left him of the favours of his loved adultress. It seems that the wretched Aubiac had entertained some presentiment of his fate; for the first time he beheld the queen he was so struck with her beauty, that he stated to the commander of the regiment of Saint Luc, who stood near him, 'Ah! what a lovely creature! could I but pass one night with her, I should not regret life, in case I were doomed to be hanged the following morning.' There is no good in divining so truly; such kinds of wishes are to be feared; and I am astonished that those who, like himself, were favoured by the princess, did not profit by his misfortune; they, to all appearance, relied upon the proverb, which states, that the gallows is made for the unfortunate, and not the culpable.

"Cavillac, having got rid of a rival who was rather sacrificed to jealousy than a just vengeance, adopted every expedient to gratify his new mistress. This illustrious gallant, equally as dirty as myself before he was metamorphosed by love, then began to consult his looking-glass, and to have recourse to all the accessaries that might embellish his short stature. But it was in vain he adorned himself; he could never fix the unsteady temper of his inconstant queen. Her only complaisance towards him was an endeavour

to humanise him; so that, conceiving himself beloved, he left her absolute mistress at Usson. In order to accomplish her design, she reproached him with being diffident of his own deserts, and that he had little delicacy in not leaving her to pursue unconstrained her own inclination; adding, that she would live more openly with him, if she saw him persuaded that he was only indebted to her caresses for the ardour of her passion. Cavillac suffered himself to be seduced by these flattering hopes; but scarcely had he marched the garrison out of the town, and permitted the queen to replace it by another which was devoted to her, than she despatched him *to gather his apples at Saint-Cirque*, and from that period would hear nothing more concerning him. Having fortified herself with succours, which she procured from Orleans, she then gave a loose to her unbridled pleasures, taking for a model the Nanna of Aretin; and profited so well by his instructions, that she was very capable of giving lessons to the wife of Joconde, as well as that of the king of Lombardy. It is true, however, that fearful of subjecting her person to a master, she contented herself with her secretaries, her choristers, and some of the minor would-be nobility, whose houses, as little known as their names, even in the environs, are not worthy of any place in this narrative.

"I cannot, however, pass over in silence the celebrated Pomini, son of a tinker of Auvergne, whom she took from the cathedral, where he had

officiated as a singing-boy. On account of his fine voice and musical acquirements, he passed from the chapel to the chamber, and from thence to the cabinet, ultimately acquiring the post of secretary, in which he for a length of time performed different parts, and expedited despatches on various topics. This youth, of all her admirers, was the one whom she most tenderly loved. It is of him she stated, that he changed at pleasure his body, voice, countenance and skin; and that he obtained from her an audience with closed doors whensoever he required it. It was upon his account she had the beds of her ladies raised so high, that every thing that transpired beneath might be viewed without stooping; which was for the purpose of preventing his concealing himself: it was him whom she so frequently sought at night by tapping against the arras: in short, it was on his account she composed the couplets so incessantly sung at court, commencing as follows:—

We'll offer to field, wood and glen,
All that eyes, tears and voice can discover,
The sonnet, the vow and the pen,
Of chorister, poet and lover, &c.

"At present, however, the scene is altered; he is, on the contrary, now become a wicked man, who creates disorders in her household, and proves too well that we no longer have the same eyes when the heart is changed.

"I have, perhaps, extended the recital of these intrigues too much; but as this manifesto may

perhaps continue many centuries upon record, I conceived that it was requisite I should acquaint posterity with circumstances which I have not detailed to the Holy Father, and cardinal Joyeuse, commissary of his holiness, nominated to inquire concerning the claims set forth for a divorce; conceiving that it was more modest not to sully their imaginations by a recital of so many impurities. I have had the discretion to answer nothing to the twenty-two articles contained in my interrogatory, which could in the slightest degree attach to the honour of that ungrateful woman. It is true, that when interrogated as to whether I had consummated the nuptials, I could not do other than reply, 'We were so young when our marriage was solemnized, and both so much inebriated by love, that we yielded to those impulses which were permitted by the law.' If I have swerved from the truth in this manifesto, I appeal to her own friends, if her notorious life has yet left her any; and I permit them to state whether I have added or diminished any thing; for I prefer omitting some circumstances rather than retail all her *weaknesses*. According to my idea, such is the real name that ought to be attached to her jealousies and her last amorous furies, which commenced with Bonnivet, and have uniformly continued on the same footing. Who could for a moment have suspected of so many meannesses the daughter of one of the greatest and wisest monarchs of the earth? Notwithstanding this, from queen she became duchess,

and from being wife of the legitimate king of France, the impassioned lover of his meanest officers. Although no longer restrained by any consideration when her desires are to be gratified, she conceives that the eyes are to be dazzled by profaning the most august mysteries of our religion. Thrice every week she approaches the holy table with a mouth as loaded with impurity as her heart, with a face plastered over with white and red paint, and a bosom uncovered as low as the shoulders.

"Her determined love for Pomini has been attributed to some charm, because she is usually seen to wear between her skin and the shift, a blue silk purse, suspended from her neck, enclosing a silver box, upon which are engraved several mysterious unknown characters. This she opened in presence of some of her friends, who noticed her portrait on one side, and on the other that of her tinker. She then stated with tears in her eyes, that she had only engaged to open it at stated times, and to preserve it until death. It is not, however, at the present day that we attribute to supernatural intervention any extraordinary events of which we cannot develope the causes. The same circumstance was stated of the duchess de Valentinois; it was in her time affirmed, that she was indebted to magic for the extraordinary ascendency she possessed over the mind of Henry the Second, father of the queen of Navarre, that debauched woman, than whom none ever succeeded better.

There does not exist a more upright judge than the conscience; it awakens and stings us with remorse, when we appear to be drowned in a profound lethargy. It was on this account that while the princess continued shut up in Usson, where none approached her but persons of such an inferior rank that they ought to have trembled before her; she could neither hear a cough, a laugh, nor a word in her presence, but she conceived that it was intended to ridicule her. I have got rid of her, thanks to Heaven, and I am yet a man to say two words to her, were she deserving the pains.

"It appeared that the disorders of her past life were effaced from the memory of man; age, time, and her voluntary seclusion, had prevented her intrigues from becoming public; her constancy in vice had wearied the tongues of the most malicious, which only pour forth their venom on that which possesses the charm of novelty: ten years' absence had almost effaced her name from the recollection of the great personages of the kingdom; but in order to put the finishing stroke to such a life, and crown that portrait which had only before been sketched, she was desirous that Paris and all the court should become the theatre where she was to perform the final act of the piece, which she promises herself to write for the gratification of the public. In her youth she had sufficient connexion with the nobility and those of the third estate; and, lastly, in order that the clergy might

not have cause for complaint, she proceeded to alight at the mansion of the bishop of Sens; upon which event the following lines were penned:

As queen the sumptuous Louvre's door,
Mansion superb, was thine at least;
But since thou hast become a w——e,
Thou livest 'neath the roof of priest.

"If she possesses one honourable sentiment, there is little doubt but her soul must be cruelly tormented, on casting her eyes upon the Louvre, and calling to mind that her notorious conduct has deprived her of the right which was due to her birth, of becoming its inmate. One more chaste than herself could not look upon that superb palace without blushing.

"The six first weeks she spent at Paris and at the Bois de Boulogne, when her conduct was to all appearance decent, and no lover was seen to approach her; but at the end of that period she became weary of such constraint and sent to Provence for a valet, in order to console herself during the absence of Pomini, whom she had ennobled at Usson for some years past with six yards of stuff. The absence of her musician so sensibly affected her, that on his return to reward himself for the chagrins caused by absence, she sometimes continued shut up with him for eight days together without being seen by any one but madame Chatillon, who stood sentinel at the door, endeavouring to conceal what took place from the court and the city. This lover, a car-

penter's son of Arles, formerly *laquais* of Garnier, one of the masters of my chapel, had become so dear to her, that to preserve his memory, under an allegory of which no one but themselves could solve the mystery, she caused her tapestry to be embellished by the representation of palm-trees. This precaution was well adopted, for two months after her favourite had arrived at Paris, young Vernon killed him at the door of his carriage. The displeasure caused by this circumstance rendered the hotel odious to her, where she had enjoyed so much pleasure in the jaws of death. In order, therefore, to efface the recollection, she abandoned the quarter of Saint Anthony, and retired to the suburbs of Saint Germain, where she employed all the poets to celebrate the memory of the illustrious defunct. She wept a considerable time, although the eloquent Bajomont, assisted by his comrade Le Maire, strove to console her by stronger reasons than those that might have been elicited from Seneca.

"Every thing finds an historian; even these heroic actions will not stand in need of such aid; and I feel fully persuaded that those who peruse them will admire her pertinacity in vice, which neither age, the diminution of beauty, nor the affronts she experienced, were capable of conquering. They will equally agree that such a life ought to stand registered in the temple of Paphos, to serve as a model for those who wish to enroll themselves in the celebrated corps of the Cyprian goddess. Those, who for the pur-

pose of procuring from her pecuniary benefits, dedicated some books to her, and penned her panegyrics, in vain strove to ennoble her with virtues which she never possessed; a long tradition which will be handed down from father to son for many centuries, will belie and brand them with base flattery as well as cowardly imposition; independent of the reproaches they have reason to apprehend from those who, after their death, shall peruse their writings; they ought not during life to expect any reward for their labours: because no one ever yet applauded himself on account of benefits received at her hands, and every one complains of her ingratitude. Her most favoured lovers were never enriched by her presents; and the gaols are full of those whom she has ruined. She has frequently been seen distributing charity, but never paying a debt with an open heart. She has uniformly displayed so little attention to religion as never to attend a sermon without sleeping; vespers, without talking; or the mass unaccompanied by a gallant. She, at my expense, pays the tenth of her rental and her pensions to neighbouring monasteries; but she retains the wages of her officers, and the price of all merchandize furnished during the year, for the maintenance of her household. She seeks for nothing but external appearance and vanity, and has in heart no one sentiment of honour or piety.

"I thought to have terminated this manifesto by depicting her inclinations; but Bajomon pre-

vents me, and compels me to give him a dash of the pencil. That man, the greatest ideot that ever appeared at court, owed his introduction to madame D'Anglure, instructed by madame Roland, and finished off by Le Maire. She created him her idol, although his ears had been boxed by De Lone, son of a procurator of Bordeaux; and she took charge of making his fortune, in order to prevent his ending his days at the hospital. I will not enter into a detail of their amours, as nothing would be narrated but low disgusting conduct unworthy the character of a queen. Some little consideration towards her urges me to draw the curtain and terminate this recital, which is already too long and tiresome. I am content to pray to the Almighty in order that He may touch her heart and extend towards her his all-sufficient grace, without which she can have no reason to hope for her conversion, or that she will be awakened from the dream of infamy that overpowers her."

From this singularly curious document it is obvious that the divorce demanded by Henry could not in justice be refused. Yet, as affairs at the court of Rome are uniformly procrastinated, and madame de Beaufort awaited with extreme impatience the developement of this business; the king, to console his mistress, conferred upon her the title of duchess of Beaufort; shortly after which she proved pregnant for the fourth time. Henry, in consequence, felt additional passion;

and the desire to make her his lawful wife increased. The king, therefore, wrote to Sillery in the most pressing terms, supplicating him to urge the business on which he was delegated with all possible expedition.

Grandeur generally puffs up with pride individuals in ordinary life: such, however, did not prove the case with the duchess; for no sooner had the monarch invested her with this new title and created a duchy under that denomination, than she became so popular, kind, and obliging, that those who were not desirous of loving her, could not make up their minds to hate her. She conducted herself to every one with extreme gentleness, and proved serviceable to all who stood in need of her credit. The king then undertook a journey into Picardy, and fell ill on the road, on which account his adored duchess penned the following letter:

"I die with apprehension; revive my spirits by stating how it fares with the best and bravest man on earth: I am apprehensive that his illness must be of consequence, since nothing short of that could deprive me of his presence. Forward me news upon the subject, my cavalier, because thou knowest how much the least of thy ills is mortal to me. Although I have this day heard news from you twice, I should not be able to sleep did I fail to send you a thousand good-nights; for I am not gifted with niggardly constancy: I am princess Constant, and alive to all

that affects you, and insensible to every other thing in this world."

This letter, as well as the preceding, is from the original; and on that account the style has been preserved as closely as possible. We will now give Henry's reply to that tender effusion, being as follows:

"My heart, On awaking this morning I received news from you; which will render this day more prosperous. I have received none from the neighbourhood of Saint-Paul since I left you. I shall not forget to call to mind twice during this day the good graces of my dear loves, for the love of whom I will preserve myself more than I have ever yet done. To-morrow you will see Cæsar, which I envy you. Continue to love your dear subject, who until death will never love but you. With this truth I conclude, kissing you a thousand times with as much tenderness as yesterday morning. Peronne, this 26 May."

Sillery followed up his commission at the see of Rome with unremitting ardour, but found more difficulties in the way of procuring Henry's divorce than he had imagined; for queen Margaret, fully convinced that as soon as their marriage was dissolved the king would espouse the duchess of Beaufort, made the pope acquainted with her determination, which was that she would never agree to a divorce upon those terms. The sovereign pontiff, on the other hand, anxious to render himself of consequence, every day raised fresh obstacles. He stated that he did not

see how he could in conscience legitimatize children born in adultery; besides, he foresaw that such a step would create great troubles as to the succession, and could not be prevailed on to issue the bull so ardently wished for. The king's ambassadors, however, pressed the measure, representing to his holiness that their master would perhaps be constrained to adopt the line of conduct pursued by Philip le Bel; that is to say, enter a legal process against queen Margaret on the plea of adultery.

While the king's emissaries adopted these strenuous proceedings at Rome, the hope of obtaining a divorce caused a great intrigue at the court of Henry. All feeling minds possess delicacy, and if they go astray it is not accompanied by depravity. The king betrayed great weakness in affairs of the heart, but his morals were never dissolute; he was not hurried on by imagination or governed by a woman; his attachment arose from love. Although his amours produced no influence on public affairs, yet we feel pain in excusing them, as they constituted the only blemish in his character. We should more easily tolerate these wanderings of the heart in a monarch less worthy to be admired; but it is impossible not to lament that fatal ascendency which deprived so great a character of perfectibility. The duchess of Beaufort combined with personal beauty the charms of tenderness, modesty, and many other endearing qualifications; but favourites in general only think and act from the

suggestions of those intriguing courtiers who acquire possession of their confidence. The duchess, spurred on by her ambitious aunt, the marchioness de Sourdis, dared aspire to the throne of France, as soon as a divorce should be effected. Many courtiers who, as we have before stated, loved her on account of her gracious manners, and, above all, the essential services she had rendered them, applauded the design, which soon became public. Notwithstanding this, all her endeavours to obtain in any way the suffrage of Rosny proved unavailing. She ascertained on a thousand occasions that he employed the arguments of reason and friendship to deter the king from forming a union so unworthy of his dignity. In consequence of this, the duchess became the determined enemy of that inflexible minister, whom nothing could soften when the glory of his master was in any way concerned. Henry, afflicted at their enmity, was desirous of effecting a reconciliation; for which purpose he conducted Rosny to the residence of the duchess, who, presuming too much on the ascendency she had obtained over the king, treated the minister in the first instance with disdainful haughtiness, and in the sequel gave vent to violent passion; upon which Henry remarked, "that the original cause of his attachment towards her was a gentleness which he had conceived she possessed, but that he had for some time remarked such was not the case; but that she would strangely deceive herself if she imagined he could sacrifice

such a faithful friend, and he therefore commanded her to get the better of her hatred towards him, and only be guided in future by his advice."

Scarcely had the monarch concluded when his mistress gave vent to a string of reproaches particularly directed against Rosny; when, after exhausting all her abuse and calumnies, Henry, who had suffered her to continue without interruption, made this reply in a reserved and cold manner: "I see, madam, that you have been schooled to all this in order to compel me to dismiss a faithful friend, whose services are absolutely essential to me. You know me but little; for I declare that were I reduced to the necessity of choosing which of the two I must lose, I could more easily do without ten mistresses such as yourself than one servant like him."

This fulminating reply completely silenced the duchess; she lost all her haughtiness, became humble, and even supplicated, and then burst into tears; when, seeing the king on the point of retiring to leave her perhaps for ever, she ran to intercept his passage, threw herself at his feet, declaring that she would never have any other will than his own, and then turning to Rosny entreated that he would excuse the violence of temper she had manifested, for which she expressed her sorrow. Henry, softened, promised to forget the past, and, having quitted the duchess's apartment, he took Rosny by the hand, and pressing it with peculiar energy, exclaimed, "*Well, my friend, did I not stick out boldly?*"

"From that day," says Rosny, "the duchess displayed so much amenity and consideration towards me, that she soon acquired all her former influence over Henry's heart, who only attributed her conduct to the bad advice she had received."

Rosny, more favoured by his master than ever, still remarked that the prince frequently became sad and thoughtful; he was fully aware that something weighed upon his mind which he was anxious to confide, and yet did not dare avow. In two instances the king had commanded his minister to follow him on hunting-parties, stating that he had something particular to confide to him; notwithstanding which, he remained silent, and upon each of those occasions, even scrupulously avoided being left alone with him, being obviously very much embarrassed in his manner. At length the king one day conducted Rosny into the garden without uttering a word, holding him by the hand, his fingers being inserted within those of his minister, as he was accustomed to do, having issued orders that no one should be permitted to enter the garden. These preliminary steps prepared Rosny for some great confidence; but Henry, in order to acquire self-courage, began by conversing on political topics. Rosny, who attentively examined his master, perceived from his evident emotion that this harangue was but the preamble to other matters. The king dwelt on the numerous advantages which a peaceable government would procure

to France: one only thing, he continued, gave him uneasiness, which was, that having no progeny by the queen his wife, he was on the point of giving himself useless trouble, because after his death the disputes of the princes of the blood might replunge the kingdom into all the horrors it had suffered. He then stopped short, displaying considerable emotion; upon this Rosny remarked, that on the dissolution of his marriage it was requisite he should as speedily as possible form another alliance. The king then began to examine, in conjunction with Rosny, on what foreign princess he ought to fix his eyes; when, having passed them all in review, Henry raised very powerful objections to each in succession; they then adverted to the princesses of France; yet still there were weighty considerations in the mind of the king for their being excluded from the throne. Rosny, astonished, fixed his eyes full upon his master, whose mental uneasiness obviously increased. Henry then added that he required a handsome, young, gentle, and clever wife, who could rivet and ensure his happiness, and that his election was made! At these words Rosny stood petrified. "Guess her name," continued the king.--"No, sire," returned Rosny with a stern aspect, "I will never pronounce her name." Henry then resumed the speech, when the title of duchess having escaped his lips, Rosny bent his eyes to the ground, and continued silent: that was a sufficient reply.

The king had not ventured thus far on the

painful avowal to let the subject end there; wherefore after some moments' reflection he exclaimed, "I command you to speak freely. You have acquired the right to tell me truths: do not fear my passion when the affair rests only between us two."

Rosny acquiesced with all the frankness of a real friend combined with the energy of a faithful subject. Henry listened attentively, sighing deeply at intervals; but the subject was connected with his glory as well as that of the French throne, and he was easily persuaded. He then embraced Rosny, promising to renounce the idea for ever; and he faithfully kept his word. Had some vile flatterer possessed his confidence, that great prince, that monarch the model for kings, would have debased his character by an irreparable fault. How much did Rosny's firmness merit the royal esteem! What praises were not also due to the prince, who, notwithstanding the violent passion that enslaved him, had sufficient virtue to listen to the rigid voice of reason, and who, after having heard, did not hesitate to sacrifice to imperious duty all that constituted the felicity of his existence!

CHAPTER XVII.

Financial measures adopted by Henry in conjunction with Rosny.—The king's economy.—Address of the clergy and the king's answer.—Henry's composure on a bed of sickness.—Death of Philip the Second of Spain.—His ambition and singular malady.—Marriage of princess Catherine, the king's sister, to the duke of Bar.—Ratification of the edict of Nantes.—Singular death of the duchess of Beaufort.—Grief of the king.—Queen Margaret no longer opposes her divorce from Henry.—The king becomes enamoured of Henrietta de Balzac.—Her character.—She procures the king's consent to execute a promise of marriage.—Henry's interview with Sully on that subject, and bold proceeding of the latter.—Henrietta de Balzac created marchioness of Verneuil.—She is brought to bed of a dead child.—Divorce of the king from Margaret of Valois.—Treaty of marriage ratified between Henry and Mary de Medicis.—The duke of Savoy visits Paris.—Plot of Nicole Mignon to poison the king.—Religious controversy between Duplessis Mornay and the bishop of Evreux. — War with the duke of Savoy.—Surrender of Chamberi, Miolens, Charbonniere, and Montmelian.—Perfidy of marshal Biron.—Peace between Henry and the duke of Savoy.—The king's interview with Mary de Medicis.—Henry's generous conduct to marshal Biron.—Letter of Henry to the marchioness of Verneuil.—Mary de Medicis brought to bed of a son.

Upon Henry's return to Paris he was welcomed with transports of joy and enthusiasm, and immediately prepared to profit by the peace,

not in yielding himself up to pleasures, but labouring indefatigably for the public good. He was well aware that if it is impossible for a monarch to enter into all the minute detail of affairs, it is at all events indispensably necessary that he should not be altogether unacquainted with those circumstances that are essential to the different branches of administration. Henry acquired all those, and, in particular, every point connected with agriculture and the finances. Rosny, in conjunction with his master, laboured unceasingly to establish permanent order in that most essential department. His first measure was at the same time a good action and proof of his ability as a statesman, two things which are frequently found united under the administration of men that are truly enlightened. The agriculturists were freed from all imposts due for the preceding years, and for the time being eased of every burthensome tax. This edict, which appeared as a grateful preamble of what was to follow, received the applause of all France; the king was universally adored, and the best effect thereby produced in regard to foreign countries. If that interesting class of the population had been rigorously dealt by, it would not have disbursed even a small portion of the sums required without absolute ruin, in which case agriculture was at an end; whereas by adopting this measure it soon began to flourish, and the state recovered its real source of riches.

Rosny also adopted other measures to fill with

promptitude the royal coffers, every thing being accordant with justice and the paternal goodness of the king. The measure, however, productive of most money was a rigid economy, which did not curtail rewards, nor graces dispensed for services and merit, and consisted less in diminishing the expenditure than in throwing a light upon affairs, as well as preventing abuses and infidelity of every description. Henry equally suppressed the ravages of the soldiery who plundered throughout the provinces; he exterminated highway robbers, and restored that authority to justice which had been enfeebled by the licentiousness of warfare. He appointed to all the strong places, and particularly those on the frontiers, governors, upon whose fidelity he could place the safest reliance. He suppressed all superfluous garrisons; he disbanded the useless corps of troops; he issued rigid commands in order to oblige the soldiers to return to their respective homes, for the purpose of tilling the uncultivated soil; he set on foot large bodies of armed patroles to clear the roads from idlers and vagabonds; he made known to the gentry that it was his anxious wish they should retire to their castles and mansions for the purpose of re-establishing and economizing their revenues; he restrained the immoderate luxury which had been introduced under the reign of Henry the Third; setting himself the example, by dressing in the plainest manner, in grey cloth, with a doublet of satin or taffeta, without any open work or em-

broidery; he praised those who imitated him, and turned the others into derision, who, as he used to observe, *carried their mills and timber of the largest growth upon their backs;* he circumscribed all superfluity in the tables of his household; and during the first year of the peace issued orders for the repairing the dismantled towns throughout the kingdom, causing also remuneration to be made to the inhabitants of cities and villages who had suffered from the effects of civil discord; concerning which Henry used to say, that if war was a remedy, it was equally as dangerous as the disease; and upon the same subject he also remarked to Sully: "*Great men are always the last to advise war, and the first to execute it efficiently.*" In the sequel it will also appear that he restored the manufactures, encouraged commerce, raised superb edifices, undertook and completed great public works, and protected sciences, letters, and the arts, with as much discernment as liberality.

The riches subsequently amassed by the king amounted to fifteen millions, a sum very considerable at that period, and which was, perhaps, destined for his campaign in Germany. This treasure was enclosed in one of the towers of the Bastille, afterwards called the Treasury Tower, of which Henry gave keys to Rosny and the presidents of the parliament and chamber of accompts; "in order," said he, "that the wealth therein contained may be the better guarded, and not taken from thence without being publicly

known." As representations, however, were frequently made to the king respecting the guardianship of so much money, from motives of jealousy, the monarch's reply upon such occasions was, "For that very reason I am anxious those confidential ministers should possess keys equally with myself; it is not reasonable that sums levied on my subjects, which are more their property than my own, should ever be expended but in a fitting manner, that is to say, exclusively for their own advantage."

During the continuance of hostilities, the king had been compelled to grant the highest posts to those among the nobility who had most distinguished themselves by their courage, talents, and services: the two Birons, Bouillon, Aumont, Rosny, Crillon, La Châtre, Givry, Lanoue, De Vic, Vitry, Lacurée, Saint Luc, Lesdiguières, Montmorency, and many others.

Speaking of the brave Lesdiguières, Henry used to say, "I wish I had as many Lesdiguières as there are grains of powder in a hand grenade. He is absolutely my creature; he has never had any other master but me; he has eaten, like me, his brown bread first, and now partakes of the white, like his master." The king would also frequently rally the constable Montmorency upon his want of education; at the same time doing justice to the natural sagacity and genius of that illustrious character. Henry, who had officiated at his christening, and held him over the baptismal font, one day remarked, "*With my boon*

companion who knows not how to write, and my chancellor who never learned Latin, there is not an enterprise but I can undertake to accomplish."

During peace Henry conceived that military talents were always deserving of honour, even though they had fortunately become of no utility, because those warriors, whose military career is terminated, enjoy in society that illustrious rank to which they have raised themselves in the national records, and they share beforehand the homage of posterity, a glorious recompense which is alone their due. At the same time, however, Henry felt that after a well-cemented peace it would be requisite, without discarding the nobility, to select those persons whose profession, removed from the tumult of armies, had been to instruct themselves in the laws, the interests of the state, foreign negotiations and policy. He admitted to his council none but men of tried integrity and acknowledged merit; that body consisting of Rosny, Chiverny, Sillery, Bellièvre, Sancy, Jeanin, and Villeroy. With such a council, headed by such a king, France in a few years became the most flourishing country in Europe.

During the month of September of this year, a deputation from the clergy repaired to the castle of Monçeaux, in order to lay before the king the bad state to which the Gallican church was reduced, intreating his majesty to afford succours and apply some remedy to the evil. Henry, after listening attentively to the remon-

strances of his ecclesiastics, made the following memorable reply to their address.

"I am perfectly well aware that your statements are just; but I am not the author of those evils you complain of, as they were introduced previous to my coming to the throne. During the war I presented myself where the fire was kindled, in order to extinguish it; now that we enjoy quiet, I will do every thing that is requisite in pacific times. I know that religion and justice are the fundamental pillars of the state, which is preserved by piety; and, even supposing they did not exist, I should seek to establish them, but foot to foot, according to my wonted custom. I will so conduct things, God willing, that the church shall be in as good a state as it was an hundred years back; but it is requisite that by your good example you should repair what the evil-minded have destroyed, and that vigilance should recover all that has been lost by apathy. You have exhorted me to do my duty, and I in return request that you will equally perform yours; let you and I act well together. My predecessors have given you words accompanied by regal splendour; as for myself, in my grey doublet, I will give you something sterling: I am grey without, but all gold within. I shall write to my council, and desire them to consider your grievances; and I will conduct myself in regard to you in the most favourable manner possible."

Some days after, Henry experienced the attack

of sickness alluded to in the foregoing chapter, which excited great alarm, as it was conceived his life was in danger; upon which occasion observing Rosny at his bed's head, displaying every symptom of terror, he thus addressed him: "My friend, I have no dread of death, I have dared it in the hour of greatest peril; but I confess I feel regret at leaving life without having been able to restore the kingdom to that state of splendour which I had intended, and without having made known to my people, by well governing and relieving them from so many subsidies, that I love them as if they were my children."

One of the most memorable events of this year was the death of Philip the Second, king of Spain, surnamed the Demon of the South. This prince, by nature extremely indolent, and who uniformly continued shut up in his palace, possessed the most fatal activity of mind, and inordinate ambition — certain indications of his being devoid of real genius or talent; in short, his character is well delineated in Holy Writ by the following sublime idea: "His desires are as boundless as hell, he is insatiable as the grave." That monarch had indulged the chimerical hope of proclaiming himself emperor of the new world, invading Italy and conquering the British Isles. In this last attempt he in six years expended twenty millions in preparations for his *Invincible Armada*, which was destroyed by tempests; he subjugated the Low Countries; he overturned the French monarchy with a view

of seizing the wrecks of the kingdom, and extending his own sceptre over that realm, throughout which he had fomented troubles and ravaged its cities and territories; in fine, he assiduously toiled to become possessor of the principalities of his uncle Ferdinand and his nephew Maximilian, king of the Romans: all which intrigues and expeditions cost him upwards of six hundred million ducats! This profusion, however, appears as nothing when we direct our thoughts to the seas of human blood that flowed during those wars. In the space of forty-two years he sacrificed to his inordinate ambition twenty millions of souls, and reduced to a complete desert state more extent of country than he possessed in Europe! Yet what benefit resulted from all this direful havoc? At the termination of this long reign what were the fruits of so much blood and treasure that had been squandered? Nothing. Providence dispossessed him of all his usurpations; and the most humiliating reverses taught him at the end of his career his errors and his crimes: the most haughty of monarchs was at length only enlightened by shame, and on the verge of the grave; and the dreadful conviction became more terribly appalling, because it was no longer in his power to repair the injury. In vain did his debilitated hand trace out for his successor the most galling confessions and useless advice; he was too fatally aware of the superfluity of such retarded exhortations, having received similar lessons himself from his father Charles the

Fifth. He was fully aware that the only moral and political lesson of kings which can be of real utility, is the example they have set, and the fruits of those maxims whereby they have been guided. Philip saw with horror that he had merely been indulged with false ideas of power and glory: he knew that the potentate who regulates the affairs of an empire is only equitably judged by those whom he governs; that he appears wise and great when he renders them happy; that power when too much inflated is only transitory, because the springs being too much distended are easily severed; and that princes can never be said to reign, save when they view every thing with their own eyes; or be loved and blessed, but in making themselves personally known to their people.

It was thus while suffering the prolonged agonies of dissolution, and beholding death on the eve of wrenching from his grasp the iron sceptre, that Philip, as a punishment, thought as becomes a monarch, a philosopher, and a Christian, as is proved by his writings, and that he found himself divested of all those dangerous illusions which pervert the hearts of kings. All that remained for him was the execration of Europe; the shame, without one consolatory ray, of having failed in his gigantic project of universal empire,—useless repentance, agonizing remorse, and hope without expiation. "Philip the Second," says Anquetil, "regarded men as merely created to serve the purposes of his am-

bition; and victory would not have cost a sigh to his savage spirit, could he have ascended the throne of the universe over mountains of human victims."

The death of the prince, according to Sully, was terrible, and appeared to be the effect of Divine vengeance. His illness was of long duration; his body was covered with ulcers full of vermin, which all the skill and care of his attendants could not cleanse; and for twenty-two days in succession he was subjected to a flowing of his blood from every aperture of the human frame. He died, suffering great bodily anguish, a prey to resignation and repentance, on the 13th of September, 1598.

Towards the end of this year that able ecclesiastic cardinal de Medicis, afterwards raised to the pontificate, who had so signally contributed in bringing about the peace of Vervins, returned to Rome; having previous to his departure experienced the most marked honours on the part of the king. Henry was not at Paris when the legate quitted that city, but he despatched Rosny to see every thing executed conformably to his wishes. It is somewhat singular that a Huguenot should have been charged with such a mission: this, however, tends to prove that the greatest stretch of social tolerance then existed. The cardinal loaded Rosny with marks of his high esteem; while the latter testified the profoundest respect towards the legate, who returned to Rome with sentiments of attachment and gra-

titude towards the monarch, of which he shortly after gave signal proofs in the long-pending affair respecting his divorce.

The first event of the year 1599 was the marriage of the king's sister to the duke of Bar, mentioned in the preceding chapter; and about the same time Henry ratified the edict of Nantes in favour of the Calvinists, on which occasion he was violently opposed by his parliament, as well as the clergy and the university. Henry, however, displayed his accustomed firmness; and delivered a very long harangue in reply to a deputation that waited upon him on the part of the parliament, that speech being preserved at length in *De Bury;* after which he said in a very elevated tone of voice, and rising from his seat, "*that he was determined to punish those who should act in opposition to the edict;*" and then added, "*I shall do away with every instrument of sedition and division:*" which rare union of resolution, grandeur, and kindness of heart, was productive of the most beneficial results, as the edict was verified without further trouble on the 15th February, 1599.

We have now to relate an event which particularly affected the king, being the unexpected death of the duchess of Beaufort, although it removed many impediments in state affairs, and proved very serviceable to the monarch and his kingdom. Many persons would not believe that it had even been the king's intention to solemnize a marriage which would, no doubt, have drawn down upon him the contempt and

aversion of his people. Others, however, who were well acquainted with the seductive manners, the beauty, and, above all, the artifice of the king's mistress, were in continual apprehensions. She had completely gained over all the courtiers by her munificent presents; the well-judging were, therefore, apprehensive of the dangerous effects their flattery might create, but, in particular, of the king's weakness, which was more intimately known by the duchess of Beaufort than any other person. Every one allowed his great princely qualifications, but was also aware of his extreme tenderness for the female sex; and that, although master of his other passions, he was too much the slave of love.

We have previously remarked that from the period when the duchess indulged an idea of mounting the throne, she had entirely changed her conduct, and appeared so extremely modest and diffident that Henry frequently repented of having ever entertained doubts respecting her fidelity. It was not, however, enough that the king should feel persuaded of her probity and good faith, if the public did not entertain a similar sentiment; and in consequence of this the duchess resolved to visit Paris, in order to perform her Easter devotions. His majesty had remained during Lent at Fontainebleau with his mistress, which place he left on Palm Sunday for Melun, where the duchess caused a boat to be got ready, resolved to finish the journey by water. There are sometimes presentiments which

seem to announce the approach of melancholy events, and such appeared on this occasion to have been the case with the duchess; for, as if forewarned of her approaching destiny, she manifested the greatest disinclination to quit her royal lover, and even recommended her children to his consideration with marked tenderness, her eyes being suffused with tears.

She embarked at Melun and arrived at Paris at an early hour on Tuesday, the king having requested her to reside in the hotel of Sebastian Zamet, a wealthy private individual, supposed to be the possessor of money and estates to the value of seventeen hundred thousand crowns: this gentleman was much loved by the king, who was in the habit of familiarly calling him Bastien. Her host sought every means to make the duchess welcome, providing for the table those viands which he knew to be most agreeable to her palate. On the ensuing day she repaired to the church called *Petit Saint Anthoine* to hear matins, being accompanied by the duchess and princess of Guise, with marshal de Retz and his daughters. Madame de Beaufort proceeded thither in a litter, and the rest of the ladies in their coaches. A captain of the royal body guard uniformly accompanied the litter, and then escorted her to a chapel purposely prepared for her reception, and so situated that she could not be seen by the multitude, or intruded upon by the crowds anxious to kiss her hand or her garments. Our devotee, however, was not so com-

pletely occupied with celestial thoughts but that she could think of sublunary affairs; for it appears that she produced letters very recently received from Rome, which she gave mademoiselle de Guise to peruse, whereby it appeared that the affair of the king's divorce would soon be concluded. She then showed other communications that had come to hand that morning from the king, wherein the monarch testified the greatest affection, and an ardent desire to see her queen; which circumstances tended to make her particularly happy. In the same letters she learned from Henry that he had despatched Frene, his secretary of state, to Rome, whom the duchess regarded as a most faithful adherent, since, being married to one of her near relatives, she was convinced he would spare no pains in order to get the better of the procrastination of his holiness.

Service being ended, the duchess returned to the residence of Zamet. Some authors affirm that she had been taken with a dizziness in the head previous to leaving the church; however, on gaining the hotel, feeling somewhat recovered, she repaired to walk in the garden. While thus occupied, an apoplectic affection of the brain having seized her, restoratives were administered; and the anguish in consequence having diminished the duchess caused herself to be conveyed to the residence of her sister madame de Sourdis, near Saint Germain de l'Auxerrois, as if she had conceived her indisposition to have arisen in the

hotel of Zamet, where she had partaken of a sumptuous repast immediately previous to her departure for the church of Saint Anthony. She solicited mademoiselle de Guise to accompany her, notwithstanding which, however, the duchess proceeded first; and on the arrival of the princess, she found that madame de Beaufort was in the act of being undressed, and complained of excruciating pains in the head. Scarcely was the duchess put to bed when she again fell into convulsions, from which she was only restored by very strong remedies being administered. On coming to herself, she became anxious to write to the king; but another attack took place, which prevented her from terminating the letter. Being again in some measure restored, a note was presented to her which had arrived from his majesty; madame Beaufort, however, was unable to peruse it, the paroxysms having returned, which only ended with her existence. The acuteness of her sufferings made her give premature birth to a dead child, and she expired on the Saturday morning without having experienced any return of reason, according to all appearances.

This death was spoken of in a manner that usually accompanies the demise of great personages. The pope attributed it to the effect of his prayers; others stated that Satan had put the duchess in that state, she having previously sold herself to him in order that she might possess unlimited sway over the affections

of the king. Others proceeded to minute details, affirming that the last night of her existence she had commanded mademoiselle de la Bretonniere, one of her confidants, who usually slept in her apartment, not to feel alarmed in case she heard a noise during the night, and by no means to quit her bed; that in fact the lady in question had been awakened by a most terrifying uproar, but, in obedience to the commands of her mistress, had continued quiet; and the ensuing morning found madame de Beaufort with her neck broken. Such ridiculous tales we only repeat to show the superstition predominating at that period; however, let the cause of her death be what it might, we learn from history, for a fact, that the duchess after her decease was so dreadfully deformed and hideous in the face, that no one could look upon her without horror; the mouth being distorted to such a degree, according to numerous historians of the day, as to have been forced to the back part of her neck; which doubtless occasioned the rumour that Satan had thus rudely assailed her. A similar tale was also fabricated the same year in respect to the wife of constable Montmorency, who died, having experienced similar symptoms. In addition to the above assertions as regards the duchess, it was also said that she long before knew what would be her fate; for that one day walking in the Tuileries, she had met a famous adept in the occult sciences, who was in the habit of drawing horoscopes, and telling the

fortunes of ladies at court: madame Beaufort being anxious, according to the tale, to ascertain her own destiny, importuned this personage on the subject, who declined speaking, till at length persisting and desiring at least that he would make known the manner of her death, he desired her to take the small mirror she carried from her pocket, and that she would then see sufficient to gratify her curiosity: this the duchess proceeded to do, and beheld a demon seizing her by the throat, which produced such an effect that she fainted in the arms of her attendants. In regard to this nursery tale, we beg leave to state, with the authority from whence it is quoted, "that reasonable people of the day did not yield credence to such relations."

Henry, who continued at Fontainebleau, had learned that his mistress was ill; but, conceiving it merely the result of her pregnancy, he did not hurry himself to return to Paris. The third courier, however, who conveyed the news of the continuance of her malady, urged his departure. As it was judged expedient that the king should not arrive at such a critical juncture, La Varenne had proceeded to marshal Ornano, who was attending to hear a sermon preached at Saint Germain de l'Auxerrois, and stated to him the news of the duchess having just expired, at the same time soliciting that he would set forward in order to meet the king and prevent his coming to Paris. The marshal requested the marquis of Bassompierre, who was also present, to accom-

pany him, and they without loss of time set forward, and found his majesty on the other side of Saussaye, near Ville Juif, riding at full gallop on a race-horse.

The prince no sooner beheld the marshal than he felt an internal conviction the duchess was no more; and his grief was, in consequence, equally as violent as had been his love. He wept, he cried aloud, and complained in a manner that fully evinced the greatest princes are equally weak with other men. Henry was then conducted to the monastery of Saussaye, where a carriage having been procured, he was driven back to Fontainebleau, at which place he found assembled most of the nobility of his court, who had repaired thither as soon as the news of the duchess's death became public.

Henry, on entering his apartment, requested that every one would return to Paris and offer up prayers to Heaven for his consolation. The king only retained Bellegarde, the count de Lude, Termes, Castlenau, La Chalosse, Monglas, and Fronteval. Bassompierre was also on the point of retiring, but Henry requested him to remain, in order to detail the circumstances attending the duchess's death, that nobleman having been one of the last individuals who was near the person of his mistress previous to her fatal exit. During five or six days the king was only visible to the individuals he had so selected, and some ambassadors, with whose visits of condolence he could not dispense.

In this state of affliction the king stood in need of his true friend, but he dreaded the austerity of his manners; nevertheless he summoned Rosny, who obeyed the mandate with alacrity. This faithful counsellor, in the first instance, only thought of his master's anguish, which he commiserated and shared, expatiating upon the good qualities of her whom he regretted with so much feeling. "Although not consoled," says Sully, "yet this indulgence mitigated Henry's pain," who, addressing himself to his friend, said, "that he felt obliged for his placing the attachment that caused his grief to the account of those feelings formed by real sympathy, and not as being the result of a disordered imagination; that he had been apprehensive he would have sought to console him only by overwhelming his mind with confusion, whereas he fortified him much more by commiserating his situation." A truly noble example, which proves that inflexible principles may be combined with generous and tender indulgence, and that it is only then the ascendency of virtue really becomes supreme.

As the greatest affliction is assuaged by time, and Henry not being one of those weak-minded princes who delight in perpetuating their sighs and tears, it was at length perceived that his grief diminished. The duke de Retz, who had permitted him the indulgence of his sorrows without interruption, seized that favourable opportunity, and with a smiling countenance remarked that he had more occasion to rejoice than be

afflicted; and if he duly considered what he had to perform, the demise of the duchess at that precise juncture was a benefit, for which Heaven ought to be praised. This truth, so seasonably delivered, produced a strong effect upon the monarch's mind, who, after continuing some time in a thoughtful mood, frankly confessed that the duke was in the right; and in consequence such a happy change was produced, that resignation speedily assumed the place of sorrow.

Queen Margaret, who, as we have previously remarked, had opposed the dissolution of her marriage with Henry, made no objection whatever as soon as she learned the death of the duchess of Beaufort; but was, on the contrary, the first to propose that measure. In consequence of this, she forwarded a petition to the king, requesting his sanction to her addressing the pope to that effect; with which proposal Henry cheerfully acquiesced. The pontiff, in consequence, being desirous of acceding to the wishes of both parties, appointed cardinal Joyeuse and other prelates to decide on the affair, and dissolve the marriage, if the depositions on both sides proved correct.

Henry's love for jocularity, and extreme good-nature, has been sufficiently demonstrated; the following anecdote, however, as bearing reference to his queen, is not among the least facetious that are extant respecting him. Walking one day in the environs of Paris with a few of his most familiar friends, he suddenly stopped,

and bending forward, looked through his legs towards the city, exclaiming, "*Ah! what a nest of cuckolds I behold yonder!*" One of the lords present, imitating his position, immediately cried aloud, "*Sire, Sire, I see the Louvre:*" alluding to the known infidelity of Margaret.

The king, whose heart was now disengaged, could not help frequently recalling to mind his defunct mistress, and expressing his regrets. His favourites, who were well acquainted with his character, well knew that the best means to wean him from his sorrow would be to introduce their master to some new object, whose graces and beauty might console him for those of the mistress he had lost. For this purpose a hunting-party was purposely planned, which should take place in the vicinity of the castle of Malherbe, belonging to the marquis d'Entragues.

That nobleman had two daughters, both very beautiful, and superior to the generality of females in mental acquirements, particularly the eldest, named Henrietta de Balzac. This lady was daughter of Mary Touchet, whom we mentioned early in the first volume as having had a natural son by Charles the Ninth; after which that monarch gave her in marriage to the marquis d'Entragues. Madame d'Entragues having learned that it was the intention of the court to introduce Henry to her daughters with a view to enslave his affections, conceived, as a wary mother, that she ought to forward this design; and in consequence sent to invite the king to her castle on

his return from the chase, of which we have recently spoken.

So numerous are the tales handed down respecting Henry's familiarity towards the meanest of his people, that, having just referred to the subject of hunting, it is conceived the following trifling digression will not be found divested of all interest.

A short time after the peace of Vervins, Henry, being on his return from the chase, very simply attired, and accompanied only by two or three gentlemen, passed the river at the quay Malaquais. Perceiving that he was not known by the ferryman, he questioned him as to what was said respecting the peace. "For my part," said the boatman, "I know not what you mean by the peace; every thing is taxed, even to this wretched boat of mine, with which I can scarcely exist." "*And the king*," resumed Henry, "*is it not his intention to look to all those things?*"—"The king is an honest sort of a fellow," replied the boatman, "but he has a mistress who requires silks and taffety in abundance, for which we are called on to pay; yet even that might be pardonable were she true to him, but they say that she grants her favours to many others." Henry, whom this conversation had greatly amused, sent on the ensuing day for the ferryman, and made him repeat all he had uttered, before the duchess of Beaufort; upon which the irritated mistress was desirous to have him hanged on the instant. "*You are a silly woman*," said the king; "*it is*

only want that makes the poor fellow in a bad humour. It is my order that he shall in future pay no impost for his boat, and I'll be sworn he will every day sing out, Long live Henry! Long live Gabrielle!"

On another occasion the king being on a hunting-party in Vendomois, and separated from his followers, came up with a countryman sitting on the trunk of a tree. "*What art thou doing there?*" said Henry.—"*By my soul,*" replied the rustic, "*I was waiting here to see the king.*"—"*If thou art willing,*" answered the prince, "*to get up behind me, I will conduct thee to a spot where thou mayest see him at thine ease.*" The countryman took the king at his word, and mounted, inquiring as they trotted forward, in what manner he should be able to recognize the monarch. "*You have only to remark,*" said Henry, "*who continues to wear his hat while all the rest remain bare-headed.*" The prince, soon after rejoining the chase, was saluted by the whole court. "*Well,*" said Henry, "*who is now the king?*"—"*By my soul, sir,*" replied the countryman, "*it must either be you or I, for we are the only two that keep our bonnets on our heads.*"

Henry, from representations made, being predisposed in favour of mademoiselle d'Entragues, was glad to profit by the invitation, and thus voluntarily fell into the snare that was spread to entrap him. Upon this occasion he found the lady much more beautiful than had been pictured to his imagination, and possessing an amiability he had little expected to find; wherefore, unwill-

ing to quit this beauty with whom he was so fascinated, he continued some time at Malherbe. During this visit the two sisters always took their repasts at the monarch's table, and slept in a chamber not far removed from his own. From the castle the court removed to Hallier, and madame d'Entragues to Chenau, whither the king daily repaired in order to have interviews with his new mistress, who, by her mother's advice, acted her part to perfection, and succeeded in completely captivating her royal admirer.

Henrietta de Balzac was younger than the duchess of Beaufort, but not so beautiful, and far from possessing the candour of youth. Educated under the direction of parents who possessed unbounded ambition, she had from a very early period filled her imagination with projects of grandeur in regard to herself and her family. A stranger to all pure ideas of real felicity, she was equally so to every tender and liberal sentiment. Each thought and intention was worldly; to her mind affection for the authors of her being was the endeavour to procure for them high employments; and the acquiring of friends centred in the ensuring to herself powerful advocates. In the career that was opening to her view she only perceived one species of merit, the knowing how to deceive, undermine, and accomplish a court intrigue; in short, to acquire a splendid rank and immense wealth, constituted in her idea the only desirable objects of life: she had never reflected on the real

modes of obtaining them, resolved beforehand not to discard any that might prove of utility. This early corruption of the heart had predisposed her to indulge the most heinous passions: love was in her breast a cold calculation, and not a weakness; vindictive and implacable, she was frequently observed to shed tears on becoming reconciled, and yet she never pardoned; a character the more dangerous being concealed by the most seductive graces, a lovely figure, and an acute mind. Such was the woman who acquired a complete ascendency over the heart of Henry! The monarch in reality never loved any but Gabrielle; for that passion, on becoming extinct, left him the remembrance of a tender friend, and he never forgot it. Henrietta d'Entragues ensnared the king by artifices; her extreme youth banished all ideas of mental depravity; he for a length of time imagined that she was ingenuous and susceptible of the tenderest feelings. Her wit charmed him, so that when he at length acquired a more perfect knowledge of her mind, she had completely succeeded in riveting his chains.

The marchioness d'Entragues having repaired to Paris, the king set out for Orleans, where he arrived on the eve of the festival of Saint John; when he found the wife of marshal de la Châtre, accompanied by her two daughters, who, notwithstanding their beauty, could only retain the monarch for two days. He set forward again post for Paris, in order to rejoin Henrietta, who resided at the hotel de Lyon; wherefore the monarch

alighted at that of Gondi, in order to be near her. Her parents, anxious to profit by circumstances, closely observed him, fearful lest too much intercourse might extinguish the king's passion; and they, in consequence, treated the count de Lude very cavalierly, who was frequently despatched by Henry to make inquiries concerning their daughter. The marquis d'Entragues, however, was not satisfied with offering such insults, but proceeded so far as to desire the count would abstain from visiting him, since he merely presented himself for the purpose of dishonouring his house. Henrietta very adroitly seconded all the views of her father, and tempered her refusals with so much seeming modesty that the king only became more entangled in the labyrinths of passion; so that, notwithstanding a parsimonious inclination which Henry is said to have indulged, he sent her, by way of present, an hundred thousand crowns at one time.

Henry has been taxed with penuriousness, but it is necessary to call to mind that a king in similar cases is only economical of the public purse. The prince having learned that he was blamed on this account, made the following sensible remark: "I am accused of being stingy, whereas I perform three things very opposite to avarice: I carry on war, I make love, and I erect buildings."

Henrietta, as might be expected, received the amount, testifying every wish to accede to the monarch's wishes, but excusing herself on the

plea of her parents, who, she said, watched her so narrowly as scarcely to allow her freedom of speech. She farther requested that his majesty would pursue measures to render them more tractable, promising to do all in her power to forward his views, being in a state of despair owing to their severity. Having for some time kept the king in a state of agonizing suspense, Henrietta made known to him that it was impossible to prevail on her parents on a point of so much delicacy, unless their consciences were set at rest, and their honours secured, by the king's confiding to her a promise of marriage. Henrietta intimated that such a document was not intended to be put in force; and even in the event of her father's having any such intention, what chance could he hope for in opposing a monarch at the head of fifty thousand men; but that, as such was their desire, he ought not to hesitate in complying with their wishes, and thus setting all their scruples at rest. Finally, she conducted this affair with so much art, that a promise of compliance was at length elicited from the monarch, who agreed to execute a written document, whereby he would bind himself to marry her at the expiration of a year, in case during that period she should bring forth a son.

As the prince, however, could not do any thing without consulting Rosny, he wrote the document required, and then gave it to the latter for his inspection, who stood mute and transfixed with astonishment. "*There, there,*" said Henry,

smiling, "*speak freely; do not thus act the discreet:*" after which he added, "*you may give vent to the feelings of your soul; for I shall not be angry.*" Rosny upon this made his master repeat the assurance, accompanied by an asseveration; and then taking the instrument from his hand, tore it in pieces: "*How now!*" exclaimed the king, "*are you turned a fool?*"—"*Perhaps, sire, I am a fool,*" answered Rosny, "*and would to God I was the only one in France!*"

Henry, excessively irritated, picked up the several scraps of paper; and while so occupied, his friend continued to offer in strenuous terms the most wholesome advice, which the king, notwithstanding his anger, stopped to hear; and when he had ceased, hastily left him, and entered his cabinet in order to draw out a fresh writing, the above scene having occurred in the gallery at Fontainebleau. Rosny, under the greatest apprehension, continued walking to and fro absorbed in melancholy reflection, never for a moment losing sight of the study-door. At the expiration of ten minutes the king, having re-written the document, came forth, and passed by Rosny with an assumed air of haughtiness, without either speaking or regarding him, and immediately set forward to rejoin his mistress at Malesherbe. Rosny, in consequence, naturally conceived himself in disgrace; whereas, without any explanation, the monarch two days after conferred upon him the post of grand master of the artillery.

The publicity of Henry's conduct in regard to mademoiselle Henrietta d'Entragues, greatly alarmed the ministers, who were fully aware that this mistress was equally ambitious with her predecessor the duchess of Beaufort, and were therefore apprehensive of his wishing to espouse her. In consequence of this, the king's advisers strenuously supplicated him to consult, in marriage, the welfare of the state, at the same time proposing Mary de Medicis, daughter of the grand duke; with which measure Henry after some time complied, ordering Sillery to negotiate that affair with the pope. While this measure was on the *tapis*, every endeavour was made to separate the king from his mistress, who artfully disputed her footing inch by inch. Henry had as yet only obtained some trifling favours, either because he had not delivered the promissory paper, that no favourable opportunity had been afforded him to gratify his ardent desires, or that by retarding his wishes, such resistance might augment the fervour of his love. Notwithstanding this situation of affairs as regarded Henrietta, the monarch was not prevented from enjoying for one night the society of mademoiselle de la Glandée, whose virtue was not of such a stubborn nature as that of the former beauty: this meeting was effected at the house of Zamet; upon which occasion, however, Henry had scarcely entered the bed ere he was alarmed by the clashing of swords. He first summoned Bassompierre to ascertain the cause

of this affray, when he learned that the combatants were Bellegarde and the prince de Joinville, afterwards duke de Chevreuse, and that their quarrel originated in the latter pretending that Bellegarde had insinuated some disrespectful things to the king respecting Henrietta d'Entragues; that words having arisen, they had drawn their swords, Joinville being wounded, while Vidame du Mans, who had shewn himself desirous of separating the combatants, was also dangerously hurt. Henry, upon this, left his bed, threw on a dressing-gown, and taking his sword, advanced to the staircase, preceded by Bassompierre, who carried a light; but he only found Pralin, who had just been closing the doors, the authors of the tumult having retired. The monarch then flew into a violent passion, and on that very night issued his commands that the president, accompanied by the parliament, should wait upon him early the ensuing morning. This mandate was obeyed, when the king ordered that every inquiry respecting the quarrel should be set on foot, and a speedy judgment pronounced. The duchess of Guise and her daughter, feeling more interested for Bellegarde than Joinville, having learned these facts, pursued every means in order to quash the proceedings, and at length put a stop to the measure, after which the business was amicably compromised between the parties.

Intrigues similar to that of the king with mademoiselle Glandée, were by no means uncom-

mon; in proof of which we have the following ludicrous anecdote detailed by Sully:

Henry being in a chamber with a favourite lady, Rosny passed into the anti-room, and was proceeding, when he was informed by the attendants that his master was engaged. The wary minister conceiving that some intrigue was carrying on which the king wished to conceal from him, retired to a passage, and looked out at a window commanding a view of the private door communicating with the chamber where Henry then was. He had not long continued there when he beheld a lady come forth habited in green, with whose person he was unacquainted, and soon after the monarch made his appearance, saying, "*How are you, Rosny?*" "I am your majesty's most obedient servant; —but, sire," resumed the latter, who observed that Henry was embarrassed, "it appears that your highness is somewhat heated." "I have had a fever all the morning," returned the king, "but it has just left me." "That is true, sire," answered Sully, "for I saw it pass dressed all in green." "*Ventre Saint Gris!*" cried the monarch, smiling, "it is morally impossible to deceive thee, thou art too clear-sighted."

A manuscript preserved in the Royal Library at Paris, accounts for Henry's oath, *Ventre Saint Gris!* in the following manner:—while yet a child, his preceptor, apprehensive lest he should become habituated to swearing, a custom so much in vogue under Charles the Ninth, permitted

him to adopt the above words, expressive of derision, by the Huguenots, in regard to the monks, particularly those of the order of St. Francis—*Saint Gris*, alluding to their robes, which are of a grey colour. Brantome, in his Life of Francis the First, has preserved four doggrel lines of that period, expressive of the oaths used by that monarch and his three predecessors, which are to the following effect:

When the *Paque Dieu* was dead and gone, (Louis XI.)
Jour Dieu succeeded to the throne; (Charles VIII.)
Le Diable m'emporte near it stood, (Louis XII.)
Then *Foi de Gentilhomme* as good. (Francis I.)

Some time after the king's connexion with mademoiselle Glandée, he proceeded to Blois, and on his return stopped at Chenonçeaux, where he had an interview with queen Louisa, widow of Henry the Third, at which time he beheld mademoiselle de la Bourdaisière, whose attractions made some impression on his heart. Mademoiselle d'Entragues, however, having possessed herself of the written promise of marriage, and fully aware of the measures pursued to separate the king from her, fearing lest he should escape her toils, resolved at length on changing her mode of action and becoming less obdurate. In consequence of this, at the first visit the monarch paid, he was permitted every liberty, and his utmost wishes were soon gratified.

In consequence of this intercourse Henrietta proved pregnant, when she was conducted by

her lover to Monçeaux for the purpose of being brought to bed; at which place he renewed his former protestations, declaring his love was so ardent as to prompt him to desire a marriage: it was also at this period that the king bestowed upon his mistress the title of marchioness of Verneuil.

This pregnancy, and the promissory paper, which Rosny ascertained to be in possession of the marchioness, caused him the greatest disquietude, and more particularly so as the divorce of the king, which was hourly expected, would place him at liberty to act. "*But Heaven,*" observes Sully in his Memoirs, "*performed another miracle in favour of the king of France.*" While at Monçeaux a dreadful storm occurred, during which the marchioness witnessed the falling of a thunderbolt, that entered her chamber and passed under her bed; when the fright thereby occasioned produced the premature birth of a dead child.

After this event Henry vigorously pressed for the publication of his divorce, in furtherance of which queen Margaret produced the most convincing proofs of the violence resorted to by her mother Catherine de Medicis, and Charles the Ninth, her brother, to compel her to the union with Henry, she being at that period in love with the duke of Guise. Those circumstances were of themselves sufficient to authorise the divorce; added to which some other essential formalities which had been omitted, were legal

causes of nullity. Indeed, the peculiar situation of the king, the sterility of his queen, the welfare of the state—all considerations combining together, produced such a mass of evidence that it may truly be said, no marriage, even in private life, was ever more legitimately pronounced null and void. Sillery, the king's ambassador at Rome, was in consequence directed to press the decision as much as possible, and he exerted himself with all becoming assiduity upon the occasion.

In the manifesto of Henry respecting his wife, given in the foregoing chapter, the king states that he concealed the debaucheries of his queen from the Roman pontiff: and it appears from history, as a further proof of the excellence of his heart even towards that depraved princess, that when Margaret's consent to the dissolution was given into his hands, he became excessively affected, and remarked, with tears in his eyes, "*Wretched unfortunate creature! she is well aware that, if willing, she would neither have lost my heart, nor her former rank in society.*"

The miscarriage of the marchioness of Verneuil greatly affected the king; and, during a serious illness that followed, he would not quit her society, but anxiously awaited to witness the effects of the different medicines administered, which after some time rescued her life from danger. After having been pronounced in a convalescent state, the marchioness heard of the negotiations carrying on at Rome for the marriage of

Henry with Mary de Medicis. This news reduced her to a state of despair, and she, in consequence, conducted herself so ill towards her royal lover, that any ordinary man would have felt disgusted; such was not, however, the case with Henry, whose affection, if possible, increased, while he loaded his mistress with new favours.

We have before had occasion to remark that Henry's only foible was love, and it is, therefore, difficult to decide whether he had any serious intention of espousing the marchioness, according to his promise; but as he piqued himself on never forfeiting his royal word, it is not improbable but he intended what he said, at the time it was uttered. Be this as it may, Sillery and cardinal d'Ossat had proceeded to such lengths in their negotiations respecting Mary de Medicis, that there was no longer any means of withdrawing.

As Rosny had been principally instrumental in proposing an alliance between his master and the Medici family, the affair was almost wholly confided to his care. That faithful minister having, with the commissaries appointed, concluded the negotiation; Joannini, the individual charged to procure the grand duke's consent, had no sooner arrived than the articles were drawn out and signed. Rosny was in consequence deputed to make the necessary communication to the king, who had not expected such a speedy termination of the business. On seeing his mi-

nister enter the apartment, Henry inquired from whence he came? "*We are just come, sire, from marrying you,*" answered Rosny; upon which the king remained stationary for some minutes, as if struck by a thunderbolt. He then on a sudden began to traverse the chamber with long strides, biting his nails, and so deeply lost in reflection as to continue for some time speechless. At length recalling his bewildered senses, like a man who had adopted a final resolution, he exclaimed, clapping his hands violently together, "Well, well, so God is willing: there is no remedy: since you state that the prosperity of my kingdom demands I should marry, why then I must marry." After which he confessed to Rosny, that the dread of not succeeding better in a second union than the first, had given birth to his irresolution; upon which the latter makes the following comment: "What a singular contradiction in the human mind! that a prince who had escaped so many difficulties in war and policy with success and brilliant glory, should have trembled at the idea of the jars and dissensions incidental to the marriage state."

It is impossible to describe the chagrin experienced by the marchioness of Verneuil, on finding all her hopes frustrated. She had reckoned upon the crown for a certainty, of which she found herself deprived by this cruel marriage; so that in case she had had fifty thousand men at her disposal, there is little doubt but her haughty spirit would have prompted an endeavour upon

her part to justify herself. She, however, dissembled her resentment; but the count d'Auvergne, her maternal brother, naturally of a bad disposition, resolved to be revenged; and in consequence entered into Biron's conspiracy, of which we shall have occasion to speak in the sequel.

While the king sought every means to console his disappointed mistress, the duke of Savoy at the close of the year paid a visit to the French court. That prince, so conspicuous on account of his magnificence and liberality, possessed by nature an artificial and intriguing temper; he burned with the desire of invading one of the provinces, which, in sovereigns over small territories, scarcely merits the title of ambition. The duke was fully convinced that every thing might be accomplished in courts by the aid of address, flattery, and presents. The morals of courtiers, however, vary according to the minds of those by whom they are governed; and in the court of Henry the Great were found enlightened and incorruptible minds capable of divining intrigues, and causing their failure.

Henry received the duke of Savoy with his characteristic cordiality, and fêtes were given on the occasion; while the duke, on his side, astonished the ladies and the courtiers by his profusion and gallantry. He commissioned one of his ministers to convey his portrait to Rosny, contained in a gold box enriched by valuable diamonds; when the latter accepted the miniature, but re-

turned the casket and the precious stones. The duke shortly after paid a visit to Rosny at the arsenal, who conducted the prince through the spacious magazines, displaying the immense train of artillery, and every other species of warlike implements he had collected there; upon which the duke, smiling, inquired what he intended to do with such preparatives in time of universal peace. To this Rosny, in the same vein of pleasantry, remarked, "that it was in order to capture Montmelian:" when the prince with infinite emotion answered, "You are not, perhaps, aware that Montmelian is impregnable."—"I know, above all," resumed Rosny, "that in case his majesty attacked the place, he would cause it to lose that title." This proud remark was at the same time a prediction.

Henry did not suffer himself to be deceived by the duke of Savoy, of whose duplicity he was soon aware; he, notwithstanding, ratified a treaty, which the prince was fully determined not to abide by; and the king, in spite of Rosny's advice to the contrary, accorded a delay of three months, in order that the clauses might be fulfilled. Some courtiers recommending their master to cause the duke to be stopped until he should restore to France the marquisate of Saluces without the expense of a war, the monarch thus replied: "I hold it from my birth, and have learned from those who nourished me, that the observance of good faith is more useful than all that can be acquired by perfidy. I shall

follow the example of Francis the First, my predecessor, who might equally have detained Charles the Fifth, but disdained to do so. If the duke of Savoy fails in his engagements, I shall derive a signal benefit; for a king takes advantage of the perfidy of his enemies, when he makes it serve to illustrate his own good faith."

Henry and the duke of Savoy being one day at a window overlooking the street, the former observed, from the great concourse of people he beheld, France must be very opulent, and then proceeded to inquire what might be the revenues of the kingdom; upon which Henry replied: "*As much as I think fit to exact.*" The duke conceiving this a vague reply, and pressing the king still further, the latter remarked, "Yes, whatsoever I may require, because, in possessing the hearts of my people, I can command every thing; and if I am permitted by the Almighty to exist two years longer, it is my intention that each peasant in my kingdom shall every Sunday have sufficient means to put '*la poule au pot,*'" (the chicken in the pot, a sentence repeated by every Frenchman to the present hour.) Then pausing for a minute, Henry concluded by the following remark: "Neither shall that prevent me from possessing wherewithal to pay my troops, and bring those to their senses who shall dare to dispute my authority."

It is thought that during this visit to Paris the duke of Savoy succeeded in prevailing on marshal Biron to betray his sovereign, who was at

the same time his master, benefactor, and friend. The duke quitted Paris with the king's acquiescence, who accompanied him to Charenton, where the baron de Lux and the marquis of Praslin were ready to escort him to the frontiers of France. Some time after this, the horrible plot of a woman named Nicole Mignon was discovered, who had intended to poison the king. She adopted the plan of addressing herself to the count de Soissons, who publicly manifested what he deemed his causes of complaint against Henry; when the count, having listened with disgust to the intended designs of the murderess, immediately denounced her; upon which she confessed her intention, and was burned alive after it had been ascertained that she had no accomplices.

The three months' interval granted to the duke of Savoy was employed in a religious controversy with Duplessis Mornay, a most experienced captain, a very erudite Calvinist, and a sound theologian, who was in consequence called by his party their pope. This discussion took place in consequence of a work published by Mornay, containing numerous quotations stated to be from the fathers of the church, which the doctors of the Sorbonne pronounced as spurious, and proved them to be such on examination. In consequence of this, Duplessis was attacked by the bishop of Evreux, and a long conference took place that terminated in the discomfiture of Mornay, when Henry loaded the bishop with praises, on account of the moderation he had adopted; and, on

quitting the chamber, asked Rosny, smiling, "*What he thought of his own pope?*"—To which the latter made this shrewd reply: "It seems to me, sire, that he is more a pope than you imagine; for he has just given the cardinal's hat to the bishop of Evreux." This saying was soon after verified; as upon the first promotion that occurred at Rome, the bishop was raised to that ecclesiastical dignity.

Henry sometimes indulged in wit even upon religious topics; it was, however, the taste of the times, and therefore by no means construed as in derision of any thing sacred. In proof of this, the monarch one day remarked, "*that the best cannon he had ever employed was the canon of the mass, through the means of which he acquired his kingdom.*"—Upon another occasion, a Calvinist physician having embraced the catholic persuasion, Henry remarked to Sully, "*that his religion must be very sick, since the doctors abandoned her.*"

Nothing was more obnoxious to Henry's mind than priests displaying bad morals, and judges with corrupt minds. In speaking of the first, he said, "I wish that I acted as they dictate; but they little think that I am aware of all they do;" and, in adverting to the second, he remarked, "I cannot conceive how there can exist men so bad as to judge in opposition to their knowledge and their consciences."

While these events occurred at the French court, the duke of Savoy violated every engagement, says Sully: and the pope, wearied out with

his subterfuges, renounced the arbitration he had undertaken in that affair; wherefore upon the expiration of the prescribed term of three months, Henry forwarded his preparatives for war against Savoy. For this purpose he divided his army into two corps, giving the command of one to Lesdiguières, which was to enter Savoy, and the other to Biron, who received instructions to attack Bresse.

The king left Lyons on the 11th of August, and laid siege to Chamberi; before which place he learned the happy tidings of a conclusion of the negotiations for his marriage with Mary de Medicis. The duke de Bellegarde, grand equerry, was deputed to assist at the espousals in the name of his majesty, who received the benediction of cardinal Aldobrandini on the 7th of October; and on the 17th the queen arrived at Leghorn, where she embarked on board the most magnificent vessel that had ever before sailed on the Mediterranean.

In the mean time Henry pursued the war with vigour; and having completely invested Chamberi, that town soon after capitulated. He then, without loss of time, proceeded to take possession of various other places, and, among the rest, Miolens, where he gave freedom to an individual who had been detained prisoner for fifteen years. This man, says Sully, was conducted to Henry's presence owing to the singularity of a prediction which had foretold the duration of his captivity, and the prince through whose means he would

acquire his freedom. The town of Charbonniere, however, was not so easily captured, being surrounded by rocks, and inaccessible to cannon-shot. Henry deputed Rosny to carry on the siege of this strong post, who having suffered many contrarieties on the part of the courtiers who were present, at length succeeded in undermining a rock, when, being enabled to plant his artillery, he took the city by assault. By the laws of war the place was consequently subject to pillage; but a deputation of the prostrate inhabitants touched the soul of the victor, and the town was thus preserved from the terrible fate awarded by the martial code.

The king then proceeded to Montmelian, a place prodigiously strong, fortified by nature, and its castle, like that of Charbonniere, standing on a rock of the most impenetrable quality. Since the commencement of Henry's reign the French artillery had become truly formidable; sixty pieces of cannon were planted before the ramparts of the town, and the repeated attacks excited terror in the besieged. The king being one day desirous to inspect the fortification, proceeded by a short route in opposition to Rosny's advice, who with a few other officers accompanied him. Having gained a narrow pass, the monarch was assailed by a discharge from heavy artillery, which was so terrible that himself and his followers were soon covered by a shower of splinters from the rock, which lacerated their flesh dreadfully. The monarch, however, with

his usual *sang-froid* quietly pursued his path, only making the sign of the cross, which Rosny observing, remarked, "It is by that act, sire, I know you to be a good catholic."

It was upon the above occasion that Henry is said to have made the following energetic remark to Sully and his followers: "Fear ought never to enter the soul of royalty; he who apprehends death will not compass any thing with me; he who despises life will always be master of mine, nor could a thousand guards be able to prevent it. I recommend myself to the Almighty when I rise; and when I go to rest, I am in his hands; and after all, I live in such a manner that I have no reason to entertain such apprehensions. It is the province of tyrants to be always in dread."

After several attacks the besieged demanded a truce, that was accorded; during which madame de Brandis, wife of the governor of Montmelian, and madame de Rosny, having shown each other marks of attention, three interviews took place between them concerning the surrender of the town. It was at length agreed that in case no succours arrived in one month the place should be given up; and as the period elapsed without any supplies being forwarded, the garrison of Montmelian marched out, when Crequi was appointed its governor, with a strong garrison of the royal forces. Rosny endeavoured to persuade the king to dismantle the fortress, as it would be impossible to dispense with giving up that strong place to the duke of Savoy on the

ratification of peace; but the perfidious advice of Biron in this, as well as in other instances of a similar nature, prevailed; by which means Montmelian was saved in opposition to the dictates of sound policy. Communications in cyphers, which were subsequently intercepted, proved that at the period in question the marshal betrayed the king in his councils, and in the operations confided to him during this campaign. Rosny from the commencement was convinced of the fact; and mentions circumstances in his Memoirs that leave no doubt as to his treachery; and the same writer adds, that Biron personally hated him, and made many attempts to destroy him, of which he adduces proofs it is impossible to controvert. Every thing, however, was developed immediately after; as a few days prior to the king's departure for Lyons, he gained a perfect insight as to the projects and perfidy of marshal Biron.

Every thing being subjected throughout the territory which it had been intended to conquer, Henry, after such a brilliant campaign, forced the duke of Savoy to ratify such conditions as he thought fit to impose; cardinal Aldobrandini, the pope's legate, being appointed mediator. Henry agreed to enter into the negotiation, and the conferences were held at Lyons, the king having appointed cardinal Perron, the constable, the chancellor, Villeroy, and Jeannin, to assist the legate. While these circumstances were transacting, Mary de Medicis arrived at the above

city, which Henry had no sooner learned than he set off post, accompanied by several nobles, and arrived at Lyons by nine at night. Being anxious to surprise the queen, Henry would not make himself known, and was in consequence detained one hour upon the bridge before he was permitted to enter the city. The king, *incognito*, repaired to the chamber where the queen was at supper, when, the attendants standing aside to make way, his majesty, on finding himself thus recognized, retired precipitately. At the conclusion of the repast he again entered the chamber, upon which the princess threw herself at his feet, when he raised, and conversed with her for an hour with his accustomed cheerfulness and affability.

It was shortly after this that Henry, when nominating the household of her majesty, appointed the marchioness of Guercheville, whom he had loved without success, to be one of her maids of honour, remarking at the time, "*that since she had really proved herself a lady of honour, she should act as such to the queen his wife.*" Another female who equally resisted the monarch's advances, was Catherine de Rohan, duchess of Deux Ponts, who replied as follows to the importunities of her master: "*I am too poor to rank as your wife, and of too exalted a house to debase myself by becoming your mistress.*"

By the treaty of peace ratified between Henry and the duke of Savoy, the former entirely relinquished the marquisate of Saluces, in exchange for which he received a number of im-

portant places, and the whole of Bresse: the duke also engaging to destroy several fortresses, and liquidate all the expenses of the war.

Previous to the king's departure from Lyons, he held a long conference with Biron in the cloisters of the Cordeliers, the marshal having no suspicion of Henry's being conversant with his criminal intrigues. Upon this occasion the monarch, with the kindness of a father and the feelings of a friend, stated it was no explanation he required, nor even a confession of his fault, since, knowing every thing, he did not stand in need of his sincerity; that he only wanted to bring him back to his duty by gratitude, and by his clemency and generosity more firmly attach him to his person. Henry then, without allowing him an opportunity of speaking, produced the intercepted documents in his own hand-writing, which formally proved his treason.

Biron being thus unexpectedly convicted of a crime worthy of death, and in presence of the monarch he had so outraged, stood pale, immoveable, and speechless. The generous prince, at that critical juncture, only calling to mind his former bravery and the services received at his hands, and also witnessing the degradation to which he was subjected, proceeded to encourage him by the most generous and conciliatory language. Overjoyed in escaping such imminent danger, the marshal assumed all the outward appearance of gratitude and repentance. He confessed, that, urged by the vehemence of

his character, excited also by the king's refusing him the government of Bourg, and seduced by the offers of the duke of Savoy, who had promised him his daughter in marriage, he had suffered himself to be dazzled by ambition for the moment, but solemnly protested that his eyes were open, and that he for ever renounced a renewal of such culpable measures. Henry, granting him full confidence, clasped him several times with warmth to his bosom, treating him with more amity than before, and confiding to him many charges of high importance and great emolument. The prince was little aware that gratitude and generosity possess no control over a heart that is corrupted by pride.

The marriage of Henry, however, was not relished by all the court; and some persons were sufficiently bold to affix the following words in large capitals on the door of the queen's apartment: "*Non erat opus benevalentibus Medicis:*" —a measure that was treated with contempt, as the authors were not even sought after. The king, in public, testified great satisfaction at his nuptials; which, nevertheless, produced no change in the feelings he entertained for the marchioness of Verneuil, who, during the festivities that were given upon the occasion, forwarded a letter to her royal lover, wherein she stated "*that those rejoicings for his marriage were the death-blows to her happiness and her life.*" (Autograph letters in the library of count Lecoulteux de Canteleu.)

Henry, however, was constantly despatching couriers to his mistress; and such testimonies of esteem at a period when they ought to have been so little expected, increased the pride of the marchioness, who went so far as to speak disrespectfully of the queen; which coming to the ears of that princess, excited her indignation to the highest pitch. The consequence was, that the whole court interfered in the quarrel, some espousing the part of the queen, and others that of the king's mistress.

Upon the ratification of the peace with the duke of Savoy, Henry had set off for Paris; and the queen having followed by slow stages, did not arrive there until the 9th of Feb. 1601. Henry, however, changed his route, embarking at Rouanne, and descending the Loire to Briare, from whence he proceeded to Fontainebleau; and there wrote the ensuing letter to his mistress, which sufficiently indicates the overbearing proceedings of the marchioness's father, and the servility of the king to the object of his affections.

"My dear love, I received your letter last night, on the return of Petit. I accept with pleasure the honour you still do me of always testifying your good grace. I was at the same time conscious of your father's astonishment. He is in the right; for his conduct has completely deprived me of the wish of treating with him. You state your desire that he may content me. I supplicate you with clasped hands, my dear soul, that I may have no more transactions with

him. You and I can arrange matters much better together, and enjoy our felicity alone. The funds to purchase an estate are ready; nothing shall be wanting. Marchaumont will be here in an hour; Mr. Fleury is already arrived. I shall occupy myself more than Nau respecting your affairs; but do not think of creating any differences between me and that man, who, since yesterday, has thought of nothing but seizing an opportunity to afflict me. I once more implore you again on my knees: manage affairs in such a manner that our hours shall only depend on ourselves. I will soon see you; yet always continue to love me as a person who only loves and will continue to love you ever. With this truth, I kiss a thousand times the little boys."

On the ensuing day Henry left Fontainebleau, and slept at Verneuil, being only accompanied by four persons. Three days after he returned to Paris, amusing himself with some ladies of the court, and five or six of his favourites. It was during this interval the queen had accomplished her tedious journey before mentioned, finding on her route the ladies appointed by his majesty for her household, consisting of the duchess of Nemours, sub-intendant, madame de Guercheville, first maid of honour; and madame de Richelieu, named tire-woman to the queen, whom the princess would not receive, having destined that post for Eleanor Galigay, afterwards married to Conchini marshal d'Ancre, who subsequently figured so conspicuously at

court, terminating by a tragic death a life of ambition and intrigue.

The tranquillity of this year was only troubled by a quarrel of a private nature, which had, however, nearly fomented anew the war with Spain. The nephew of the French ambassador, with some youths of the same nation, on going to bathe, were insulted by a party of Spaniards, who threw their apparel into the water. The French, though few in number, in consequence seized their swords, and attacking their assailants, killed two and put the rest to flight. Upon this the French youths sought refuge at the ambassador's; when the relatives of those who had been slain complained to the Spanish monarch, who, without any respect for the ambassador, caused the doors of his hotel to be forced, when his nephew and companions were dragged to prison. This news being communicated to Henry, he expressed his lively indignation, and required immediate reparation, which was obtained to the full extent demanded, and thus the affair terminated.

Peace being now permanently established, opened a new career to Henry, whose life until that period had been spent in the tumult of camps. He now threw aside his helmet and his armour, to act a different part, and become the vigilant shepherd of his cherished flock. To the bosom of Rosny he communicated his vast projects which were to regenerate a great empire; nor was ever a powerful monarch seconded

by a more virtuous and able coadjutor. Shut up with Rosny in his study, he passed in review every branch of the state, and laid the foundation of that prosperity which was the result of their combined acumen, persevering vigilance, and indefatigable industry.

"Henry," says Perefixe, "had soon great cause to rejoice, as the pregnancy of the queen was announced." About this period also, two celebrated embassies presented themselves at the French capital. The first was from the States of Venice, received by Henry with all the honours and every demonstration of gratitude due to that power which had first recognized his rights, as well as rendered him the most essential services. The second embassy was from the Grand Signor, attended by all the pomp of eastern magnificence; the credentials of the envoy being couched in the following terms: "To the most glorious, magnanimous, and great lord, following the belief of Jesus, pacificator of the differences that existed between the princes of Christendom, lord of greatness, majesty, riches, and glorious guide of the greatest; Henry the Fourth emperor of France," &c.

In these letters the grand signor professed that he counted more upon the friendship and arms of Henry alone, than of all the other combined people of the Christian world. Rich presents were mutually exchanged, and Rosny received two superb scymitars.

Henry having marched to Calais, says Sully,

the queen of England conceiving that a favourable opportunity to gratify the desire she felt to see and embrace her best friend, repaired to Dover, having previously despatched sir Robert Sidney for the purpose of inviting the king to hold a conference with her on the political state of affairs in Europe.

Henry, equally anxious to manifest his courtesy to the queen, made known by letters the esteem and admiration he entertained towards her. This epistolary intercourse, which lasted a considerable time, was obnoxious to the Spaniards, who felt their jealousy awakened. De Bury says that Elizabeth proposed to Henry a meeting midway over the channel; which the latter did not however accept, stating that he should be in despair if he exposed his sister to the inconstancy of the elements, from whence the greatest evils might accrue by driving them both on the shores of their enemies. In consequence of these alleged difficulties the interview was dispensed with, when Elizabeth wrote the following letter to Henry, which we give in the French language, as written by herself.

"Monsieur et très cher, bien aimé frère.—J'avois toujours estimé les conditions des souverains être des plus heureuses et des moins sujettes à remontrer des contradictions à leurs justes et légitimes désirs; mais notre séjour en des lieux si proches l'un de l'autre, commence à me faire croire que ceux des hautes aussi bien que des médiocres qualités rencontrent souvent des épines

et des difficultés, puisque pour certains égards et respects, plutôt pour satisfaire à autrui qu'à nous-mêmes, nous sommes tous deux empêchés de passer la mer: car je m'étois promis ce bonheur et ce contentement que de vous baiser et embrasser des deux bras, comme étant votre loyale sœur et fidèle alliée, et vous ce mien et très cher frère, que j'aime et honore plus que chose du monde; duquel (afin de vous dire le fonds de ma pensée) j'admire les vertus incomparables, et surtout sa valeur entre les armes; ses civilités, ses courtoisies entre les dames: *aussi que j'ai quelque chose de conséquence à vous communiquer, que je ne puis écrire ni confier à aucun des vôtres ni des miens pour maintenant.* Tellement que, attendant le tems propre pour cela, je me resoudrai, dans peu de jours, de m'en retourner à Londres, et prierai Dieu, mon très cher et bien-aimé frère, qu'il vous continue ses saintes graces et bénédictions. C'est ****** vôtre plus affectionée sœur et loyale alliée, &c. &c. &c. ELISABETH."

These conclusive words spurred the king's curiosity, who in consequence said to Rosny, "I have just received letters from my very good sister, whom you love so much, which contain more cajoling than ever; examine yourself and see whether you comprehend better than I do the conclusion of her letter." Rosny agreed that something very particular must have prompted Elizabeth to use such language; and it was therefore resolved that he should on the ensuing day cross over to Dover in the character of

a simple individual having private affairs to transact in London. The minister, in consequence, set forward, and landed by ten in the morning on the English coast; upon which he was instantly recognized by sir Robert Sidney, who had seen him at Calais a few days before. Sidney, embracing Rosny, inquired whether he did not come to see the queen; to which he replied in the negative, stating that Henry knew nothing of his journey, which would be of very short duration. The English lords who accompanied sir Robert, then remarked, smiling, that the precaution he had adopted was of no utility; that he would soon receive a message from the queen, who would not permit his departure so speedily. Rosny, affecting surprise, stated that it was his intention to set forward as soon as he had refreshed himself; but scarcely had he gained his inn, than the captain of Elizabeth's guard, amicably throwing his arms round him, said, that he made him a prisoner in the queen's name; and Rosny was in consequence conducted immediately to her majesty. On being introduced, the princess smiling said, "Well, well, monsieur Rosny, is it thus you determine to break down our hedges and proceed onward without coming to see me? I am the more astonished, being well aware that you love me better than any of my subjects; and I do not know how I can have given you cause to change that favourable opinion." Rosny made the requisite answer to such a flattering reception; and then expressed the warmth of his master's friendship towards her.

"To prove to you," resumed the queen, "that I give credit to all you advance on the part of the king my brother and yourself, I wish to enter upon the subject of the last letter which I forwarded to him, as I do not know but you may have seen it, as Stafford has acquainted me that he conceals nothing from you." Having thus spoken, she took Rosny aside, who was struck with admiration on conversing with our English princess, particularly when she developed the plans she had formed to restrain within due bounds the soaring ambition of the house of Austria. Rosny's surprise was no less excited on finding that Elizabeth and Henry, although never having personally communicated their ideas together, so completely coincided in all points, that even the most minute details agreed. Henry's minister then set forward, and remained but a short period in London; and on returning to Fontainebleau to make known the result of his mission, he found his master wholly occupied with Mary de Medicis, his queen, whose *accouchement* was hourly expected. Rosny, in consequence, returned to the arsenal, and, shortly before the queen's lying in, received the following billet from his master: "Come, my friend, and for this once do not think of bringing with you any one to transact business. We must not speak upon such subjects during the first week after my wife's being brought to bed; for we shall be sufficiently employed in preventing her from catching cold."

On the 17th of September, nine months after their marriage, the queen gave birth to a prince, afterwards Louis the Thirteenth. The king, transported with delight, took the dauphin in his arms, and offering a most affecting prayer in presence of the whole court, invoked the benediction of Heaven; then pronounced his own, and placing on his sword the infant's hand, supplicated of the Almighty that he might never use it but for his glory, and the salvation of France. The attendants being anxious to disperse the multitudes that were in attendance and precipitating themselves towards the apartment to procure a sight of the baby: "*Let them approach,*" said the king, "*this infant is the property of every one.*" Immediately after which he forwarded a note to Rosny in these words: "The queen has this instant been brought to bed of a boy; I make the event known, that you may rejoice with me on the occasion." And in a second communication despatched to the same minister, he used the following phrase: "Not so much for what touches me, as for the general good of my subjects."

Henry having promised his queen the beautiful chateau of Monçeaux in case she produced a boy, ratified the gift; and the city of Paris also presented sumptuous hangings of tapestry. "At the baptism," says Perefixe, "the child received the name of Louis, in memory of the great Saint, so called, and Louis the Twelfth, surnamed the father of his people."

In the enthusiasm of the moment, according to Sully, the king was anxious to show his child to the populace of Paris, "in order," as he said, "that the baby might receive the benedictions of his people." By his order, therefore, the dauphin, placed in an uncovered cradle, was slowly conveyed through the city, accompanied by the acclamations of the inhabitants of all classes, who quitted their houses to follow the vehicle on which reposed the precious hope of the nation. The multitude pressed on the passage of the prince; every one wished to see, to bless him, and observe his countenance, to trace, if possible, some resemblance of the features of their adored monarch; one vow issued from every heart, and the unanimous cry was, "Ah! may he but possess the goodness of his father."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Character of marshal Biron.—He is sent ambassador to the court of Elizabeth.—Interview between the marshal and the queen.—Biron nominated to the Swiss embassy.—Biron's conspiracy.—Treachery of La Fin.—Rosny's interview with Henry.—Bon-mot of the king respecting the duke d'Epernon.—Complaints of the duke de Bouillon.—Henry's speech to the deputies of Guienne.—Biron's interviews with Henry.—Arrest of Biron and count d'Auvergne.—Process instituted against marshal Biron.—Speech of the marshal on his trial.—His condemnation.—Execution of Biron.—Death of La Fin.—Duplicity of the courts of Spain and Savoy.—Ambassadors arrive from Switzerland, and Henry's repartee.—The king's melancholy reflections upon ingratitude.—Curious anecdote from Brantome respecting duels, and baleful effects of single combats.—Henry mediates between the Genoese and the court of Savoy.—Death of queen Elizabeth, and Rosny despatched to England to ratify a treaty with James the First.—Re-establishment of the Jesuits in France.—Public works accomplished and undertaken by the king.—Rosny's interview with Henry and the queen during the monarch's illness.—Death of the duchess of Bar.—Henry's domestic calamities.—Fresh conspiracy of count d'Auvergne.—Disgrace of the family d'Entragues.—Interesting account of Rosny's disgrace, and renewal of friendship with the king.—Movements of the Calvinists.—De Lille's attempt to assassinate the king.—Henry proceeds to attack Sedan.—Pacification with the duke de Bouillon.—Triumphal return of Henry the Great to Paris.

NOTWITHSTANDING the asseverations made by marshal de Biron, he almost as speedily

forgot the solemn assurances given to the king. His character was naturally impetuous and stern, and he abounded in *amour-propre*, which infused into his soul that presumption and temerity that proved his ruin. In early youth his father, fearful of the effect his untameable manners might produce at a riper period of life, in vain endeavoured to soften his nature by education. Biron only displayed the physical energies of the soldier; his mental powers lay dormant, and he consequently possessed little reflection; he despised reading, and affected a sovereign contempt for every species of study. He was inherently possessed of talents, but spoiled by the prejudices of profound ignorance, and the incoherency inseparable from a want of absolute principles; while his insensible heart, withered by pride, was incapable of correcting the roughness of his character. His brilliant courage, and some signal successes in the field of battle, ranged him among the most famous military commanders of the school of Henry the Fourth. That prince, and other generals of the time, surpassed him in skill; and if the prize due to intrepid valour had been awarded, the whole army would have decreed it to Henry, even supposing him to have been but a simple soldier; and of this Biron was perfectly aware. The king, at the hazard of his own life, had more than once rescued that of the marshal, and Biron retained the goading recollection; his pride could not forgive his deliverer and his sovereign this weighty obligation, added to so many brilliant exploits, and a re-

nown that raised his master above all others in universal estimation. Biron conceived that he outrivalled all other competitors, but in his estimation the glory of Henry tarnished his own, and the secret chagrin of a towering and envious spirit produced those unaccountable contrarieties of temper, which terminated by precipitating him into the deep abyss which he had himself created. For a length of time the marshal, in all private conversations depreciated the king's exploits and vaunted his own; he would frequently say that Henry owed the possession of the throne to his talents; he accused the monarch of ingratitude, pretended that he was jealous of his military exploits, forgetting at the same time the praise bestowed by the prince on his courage, when he pronounced the charming panegyric on Biron in presence of the ambassadors, which we have previously quoted: "*There is marshal de Biron, whom I freely present to my friends as well as my enemies.*" Henry was well acquainted with the nature of these conversations of the marshal, but he did not feel offended; "*These rhodomontades,*" said he, "*constitute part of his character, and all that proves nothing.*" Henry loved Biron sincerely; and was accustomed, speaking of his temper, to observe, "*that it was his natural vehemence, his black bile, and the indiscretion of his tongue:*" he admired his intrepidity, and felt convinced that he entertained in his heart the firmest attachment towards him. Generous souls never credit the dark spirit that inhabits other breasts; and he, in consequence,

passed over conduct and expressions which any other monarch would have punished with exile. Some additional proofs, however, of a more positive nature respecting the secret machinations of Biron appeared to be worthy of minute investigation; yet Henry, desirous of extending the royal bounty to its utmost limits, only wished, using his own expression, *to cure that diseased mind* by mildness and generosity. In consequence of this resolution, he presented the marshal with thirty thousand crowns, and vested in him a confidential mission, naming him ambassador extraordinary to the English court.

During the first interview Biron had with queen Elizabeth, a conversation took place which from its singularity is well worthy being recorded. By the most unaccountable indiscretion the marshal not only dared to speak of the death of the earl of Essex, which had shortly before taken place, but he commiserated the fate of that nobleman, saying, that his signal services ought to have preserved him from a fate so tragic. Elizabeth, without testifying any emotion on hearing language so misplaced, merely replied by remarking, "that every citizen in serving his country did no more than his duty; that he was recompensed by the glory and benefits showered upon him by the sovereign; that a rebellious subject ought to be punished for the safety of the state; that she had loaded the earl of Essex with favours; that he had been guilty of the crime of high treason, without having it in

his power to deny the act." The queen then added, "that notwithstanding his ingratitude and perfidy, he would have obtained pardon had he thought fit to appeal to her clemency; that nothing could touch his heart; or diminish his arrogance; and that the royal mercy having been thus repulsed, nothing remained but yielding him up to justice."

This justification, which Elizabeth deigned to make, was for the marshal at the same time a picture of his own situation, and a striking and salutary lesson for the future, which unfortunately proved a melancholy prophecy.

Some time after Biron's return from England, Henry despatched him to Switzerland as ambassador extraordinary to the Helvetic body, for the purpose of renewing the alliance of the Swiss Cantons with France. The time for its duration formerly contracted between those two powers had expired at the period of the death of Henry the Third, and this important mission was not unattended by considerable difficulties. The Spaniards, by their intrigues, had succeeded in sowing among the Swiss those seeds of suspicion which impeded the conclusion of the treaty; all the zeal on the part of the French ambassador was required to terminate the affair, and Biron ultimately succeeded. This man, who secretly conspired against his monarch, exerted during this negotiation all the activity which might have been expected from the most loyal of subjects; either because he was unwilling not to succeed in

an affair of so much publicity, or that the reception, and confidence reposed in him, by his master had, for the moment, shaken his criminal intentions. The marshal arrived at Soleure in the month of January 1602, accompanied by a splendid and numerous retinue: his magnificence, the military eloquence predominating throughout his speeches, which bore the stamp of candour, and the glory of his martial exploits, so frequently witnessed by the Switzers, produced the most beneficial consequences on a loyal and warlike people naturally attached to France. The alliance, therefore, was not only renewed during the lifetime of the king, but that of the dauphin also; the ratification of which was followed by a sumptuous festival given by the ambassador, during which the marshal was observed with the goblet in his hand mingling his plaudits with those of the guests, who celebrated the victories and virtues of the king conjointly with the prosperity of France. This was the last day of the glory and prosperity of the unfortunate Biron, who immediately after rejoined the French court, where he had scarcely arrived ere he recommenced with more activity than ever those treasonable intrigues which had previously occupied his unquiet mind. The success he had acquired, the praises and homage received from the Swiss, and the encomiums lavished upon him by his prince, only tended to increase his pride and ambition. He in consequence more closely connected himself with the duke de Bouillon and count d'Auvergne,

(brother of the marchioness of Verneuil, Henry's mistress, before mentioned,) who had greatly contributed to influence his mind in pursuing these treasonable practices. In order to ally themselves in a manner that should prove indissoluble, they signed a formula of the association, whereof each possessed a copy; which singular document was produced on the trial of Biron, that of the count d'Auvergne being found among his papers at the time he was arrested. By this instrument each reciprocally engaged himself, "on the faith and word of a gentleman, to continue united for their mutual preservation; *towards and against every thing, without any exception whatsoever,* (expressions worthy of remark,) to maintain inviolable secrecy, and to burn the writing in case any accident should happen to one of the associates." Their designs could not succeed without the intervention of Spain and Savoy; and they in consequence united themselves more closely than ever with those two powers, whose project was to favour their ambition by dismembering France, in order that they might ultimately invade and divide it with greater facility. By the secret treaty of Biron, on espousing the third daughter of the duke of Savoy, he was to receive Burgundy, Franche Comté, and the Charolois by way of sovereignty. Ambition must, indeed, have blinded the marshal ere he could be led to believe that the courts of Spain and Savoy, even supposing the conspiracy had been crowned by full success, would have conceived themselves bound

to the faithful performance of such brilliant promises.

One day after dinner, according to *Le Septinaire*, Biron waited upon the king, who was walking in the grand saloon, when, his majesty pointing out his own statue in relief triumphing over victory, exclaimed, "*Well, cousin, if the king of Spain saw me thus represented, what would he say?*" In answer to this, the marshal replied with infinite nonchalance, "Sire, he would fear you but little:" an expression particularly noticed by all the lords present; nor was it less attended to by the king, who eyed Biron askance with a peculiar look; which the latter perceiving, he suddenly sought to soften the remark by an evasive reply, which did not, however, deceive Henry's penetration.

Biron hastened to leave the court, and repaired to his government of Burgundy, there to consummate the plans already commenced, the principal of which was to cause a revolt in the provinces by means of cabals raised by the discontented. Henry, perfectly satisfied with the manner in which the marshal had conducted himself when in England and Switzerland, entertained no doubt as to his liberality having completely restored him to his duty; added to which, the king having no positive proofs of his last intrigues, was very doubtful in regard to their existence. The monarch had received similar notices in regard to the dukes of Bouillon, Trimouille, and Epernon; he was, however, satisfied with watching their proceedings until new advices,

tending to confirm the fact, at length completely opened the eyes of the king. James de la Fin, a gentleman of the house of Beauvais le Noile, the confident of Biron, who was dissatisfied with him although he did not testify his sentiments, voluntarily confided all the proceedings to his majesty.

This courtier, says Perefixe, was the most pernicious traïtor that ever disgraced France. The king, who was well acquainted with his infamous character, had frequently cautioned the marshal against having any close connexion with him, adding, "*he is a pestilence; he will be the cause of your ruin.*" La Fin was prompted to accuse Biron from motives of jealousy, as the baron de Lux had supplanted him in the marshal's good graces; as well as to revenge himself on count de Fuentes, who, perceiving his traitorous dealings, had caused his secretary to be arrested. However, in order that he might the more effectually ruin De Biron, La Fin uniformly continued to feign the same attachment towards his person. What renders the treachery of this man still more base is, if we may credit the assertion of Mezeray in his Life of Henry the Fourth, page 124; that among the letters written by Biron to La Fin, he stated in one, "*that since God had given the king a dauphin, he would no longer indulge in his fooleries, and that he desired him* (La Fin) *to return and relinquish all further proceedings.*"

The marshal had himself written and signed the project of the treaty with Savoy; in order to obtain which document La Fin conceived the

most subtle and perfidious plan. He represented to Biron that it was imprudent to preserve such an instrument in his own hand-writing, offering to transcribe it; upon which, on bringing the copy instead of burning the original, he adroitly replaced it by another paper folded in a similar manner, which he cast into the fire, and by this means became possessor of the original treaty signed and written by the marshal.

Mezeray explains this transaction in the following manner: marshal Biron took the original paper, rumpled it up, and with the negligence of a great personage carelessly threw it into the fireplace, when, instead of falling on the flames, it dropped in the corner of the chimney: which La Fin perceiving, under pretence of burning other papers, he took up the document in question, and, concealing the same, afterwards gave it to his majesty.

It is, however, certain, although Sully omits such statement, that the date of this document does not prove it to have been signed anterior to the pardon granted to Biron by the king at Lyons; or, more properly speaking, that the treaty being then only in agitation, did not bear any date. It was owing to this that the marshal during his trial maintained it was written during his campaign in Savoy; at all events, it is evident that if Biron had renounced the project, he would not have preserved that fatal instrument, since he became aware how much danger might attach to the keeping it. Besides

many testimonies, independent of those of La Fin, as well as numerous letters, completely testified a recent renewal of all his criminal intrigues. At the same period La Fin denounced to the king Trimouille, Bouillon, Epernon, and count d'Auvergne, as leaders conjointly with Biron in this conspiracy; but he did not produce any decisive documents to demonstrate their guilt. Added to this, he furnished a long list of the names of courtiers said to favour the views of the conspirators; which did not, however, produce much effect on the king's mind, since it contained one name which rendered the denunciations of all the others very suspicious. La Fin, in preparing this instrument, had been so unskilful as to insert, among others, the name of Rosny; the crime of the chiefs, however, was too apparent, and that of the marshal no longer doubtful. These fatal discoveries inflicted the most poignant anguish Henry had ever experienced; he had, however, yet left a friend in whom he could confide! The king was then at Fontainebleau, from whence he addressed a letter to Rosny, whom affairs had detained at Paris, the communication being as follows: "My friend, I desire you will join me on the instant relative to an affair connected with my service, your honour, and the mutual satisfaction of both of us. Adieu, I love you sincerely."

Rosny set forward immediately, and on arriving at Fontainebleau, met the king in the great avenue conducting to the palace, being on horseback,

and on the point of joining the chase. *Rosny speeded towards his master, and, falling on his knee, clasped him by the boot.* "I have much news to communicate, my friend," said the king, bending towards him, at the same time pressing Rosny's head with warmth to his heart: "every thing is discovered; the principal negotiator came voluntarily to implore my forgiveness, and has confessed all; he is, notwithstanding, a great liar, and I credit nothing he affirms without incontestable proofs."

Henry then dismounted, in order to converse freely with his friend; for which purpose he entered an alley of the forest, and, when at a distance from his retinue, stated that a list of the traitors had been delivered to him, adding, "*there is one among the number that will not a little astonish you; guess his name.*" "Guess a traitor!" exclaimed Rosny, "it is an act, sire, which I will never do." "*Well, well,*" said the king, "*it is one monsieur Rosny; are you acquainted with him?*" "Are all the rest no more so than myself?" said Rosny, smiling. The king no longer dwelt upon this absurd accusation, but proceeded to recapitulate every thing which La Fin had confessed, and then continued: "You see the base ingratitude of those whom I have loaded most with favours! Biron, Bouillon, D'Epernon, have at different times received from me sums more considerable than the five kings who have preceded me, (with the exception of Henry the Third) have bestowed upon their several fa-

vourites; without taking into consideration all that my assistance and protection have acquired them: for instance, the principality of Sedan, for which Bouillon has the twofold obligation of my having procured it, and then ensured it to him. I only speak of what they have received as the recompense of my own personal liberality, without annexing thereto the places and honours wherewith I have loaded them! And Biron, too; he whose life I have thrice preserved, whose first treason I forgave with so much generosity; he who is indebted to me for every thing which can be expected at the hands of a friend, and the most indulgent and bountiful master; yes, Biron conspires against myself, my son, and the state."—Sully's Memoirs, vol. 4, p. 84 and 171.

Although the favours conferred on the duke d'Epernon are not enumerated above; this trifling digression will show what was the king's opinion of that nobleman's rapacity, who on making his peace with the prince, in the first instance exacted the most exorbitant terms; of which we have spoken at a former period, a circumstance that produced the following ludicrous anecdote.

Henry being one day in his garden at Fontainebleau, accompanied by the duke d'Epernon, a native of Gascony, his gardener, stated the ground was so sterile in that spot he could make nothing thrive: "*My friend,*" said the king, looking at the duke, "sow Gascons there, for they *take* every where!"

The result of the king's interview with Rosny was, that he should dissemble and despatch Lescure to Burgundy on the part of his majesty, with an invitation for Biron to return to court, while Henry could in the interim interrogate the dukes of Epernon and Bouillon. The former fully justified himself from the aspersion; for, having heard rumours whispered abroad respecting cabals and intrigues, the duke easily conceived that, being no favourite with the king, he could not fail to be inscribed among the disaffected. Epernon, therefore, proceeded direct to his master, frankly detailing his thoughts, and renewing in the most solemn manner his assurances of unalterable good faith; and concluded by offering to continue near the royal person until every surmise respecting him should be removed from the mind of his prince. Henry, sensibly affected by this conduct, expressed the conviction he entertained in respect to his sincerity, adding with great gentleness that he nevertheless felt assured he did not love him. "Sire," answered the duke d'Epernon, "your majesty will never have a more faithful subject; but you cannot be ignorant that friendship requires a return, and is not a duty."

This bold reply was the more noble, because it was pronounced at a moment when the duke was particularly interested in dispelling the remembrance of those representations which had been made to the monarch to his disadvantage.

During an explanation which took place between the duke de Bouillon and his master, the former was far from testifying the same frankness. When Henry referred to the cabals of the discontented, of whom the duke was stated to be a chief, Bouillon inveighed against the blackness of such treachery invented by spies and calumniators to disparage the nobility of the realm, in order to give weight, or at least acquire, by apparent diligent measures, the wages of their vile employment. To this reproach, tacitly levelled at the monarch, Bouillon added a violent philippic against the government. Under the artificial semblance of a mere recital, and in reply to the king's questions, he agreed that it was true the having heard it said that the catholics, as well as the protestants complained of being burthened with taxes; and that in proportion to the prosperity and encreasing riches of the king, his parsimony increased; that the duke had, in general, remarked great discontent in regard to the ministers, and persons in place; that the protestants stated every thing seemed to announce to them their being sooner or later persecuted and proscribed, together with their children; in short, that all the reports respecting a pretended revolt had no other foundation in truth than the general complaint of a population suffering under the weight of imposts, and apprehensive of the loss of liberty.

Notwithstanding all the precaution adopted

by the duke de Bouillon to conceal his hatred and animosity under the appearance of strenuous zeal, Henry easily read the workings of his soul; for hidden satire, instead of a real justification, unmasked the secret sentiments that actuated his conduct. The duke had descanted upon and made false representations of the state of France: which exaggerations were only resorted to for the purpose of concealing the most pernicious intentions.

Henry dissembled his ideas respecting this harangue; and, wishing to embarrass the duke said, "that he should banish all further doubt, if, in imitation of Epernon, he consented to remain at court so long as reports of a seditious nature should be disseminated; that he would not retain him near his own person without making him a participator of his designs, and nominating him one of his council, in order that he might personally witness the conduct he pursued to lighten popular burthens, and thus become the means of testifying to the protestants, as well as the catholics, the sincerity of his sentiments and the purity of his intentions. Bouillon received this trying proposal with great presence of mind, seeming alike to admire and express his joy on witnessing the sentiments of royalty towards him; and gave for answer that he should lose no time in putting himself in the situation his majesty required, not only for a few months, but during his life if it was necessary, after performing an expeditious journey

to his several estates, in order that nothing might subsequently occur to interrupt the long continuance he intended to make at court. Henry was not the dupe of his duplicity; and on the following day convened a secret council, composed of the count de Soissons, the chancellor Villeroy, and Rosny, at which the first person examined was Descures, who had been despatched to Biron in order to invite him back to the court. From the testimony of this individual, one opinion only prevailed in the council, and that was, the immediate arrest of the persons of Biron and count d'Auvergne, as soon as they should arrive. The king then inquired whether it would not be expedient to follow similar measures with respect to the duke de Bouillon, while he still remained at court; upon which Rosny observed, that if the surmises and denunciations were proofs, all those included in the list of La Fin should be seized, and himself (Rosny) among the first. Henry, who detested any thing like despotism, as respected matters connected with the freedom of the subject, as well as individual property, followed the supposition of Rosny. The duke de Bouillon took advantage of that decision, and left the court with the intention of never returning. Upon this occasion the monarch being anxious to display the greatest proof of his confidence in Rosny, whose name had been so infamously inserted amongst those of alleged conspirators, confided to his charge the government of the Bastille. Some days

after, Henry resolved to set out on a journey to Poitou, in order to smother the seeds of revolt which the discontented had spread in various provinces, respecting the impost of an additional halfpenny in the pound weight on all articles sold in walled towns. The inhabitants of many cities, instigated by the disaffected, refused to pay the tax; the public coffers were pillaged, several persons were massacred who had been appointed to collect the proceeds, and other excesses committed, that were arrested in their course by the magistrates, and a stop put to any other dangerous consequences.

"The king," says Perefixe, "proceeded to Blois, and then to Poitiers, where he gave audience to the deputies from different cities, who came to petition against the *Pancarte* (such was the name given to the tax of an halfpenny in the pound weight). Henry listened to the remonstrances with great calmness, and then replied to the deputies of Guienne in the following terms, so truly worthy a great king:

"The taxes I raise are not intended to enrich my ministers and my favourites, as did my predecessor; but to maintain the necessary demands of the state. If my own revenue had been equivalent, I would have taken nothing from the purses of my subjects; but, as I employ my own first, they ought in justice to contribute something from their own. I most sincerely desire that the burthens of my people may be relieved; never did one of my predecessors so

ardently offer up prayers to Heaven as myself, that its blessings might attend the period of my reign. The alarms which are spread of my having the intention of erecting fortresses in your cities, are false and seditious; I desire no others than those that are centred in the hearts of my subjects."

This speech, in conjunction with some decisive measures, completely re-established order and submission to the royal authority. The people consented to pay the impost without further opposition; and immediately Henry began to alleviate the burthen, and shortly after suppressed it altogether. The edict whereby this tax was revoked, specifically states, *that his majesty only resolved to adopt the measure because he found his subjects willing to obey.* It is requisite to remark, that the tax alluded to was levied in opposition to the opinion of Rosny, and previous to that individual being vested with the administration of finances.

Henry's journey into the provinces was productive of the most beneficial consequences: his presence calmed the general agitation that prevailed, and the prince experienced in every direction the most unqualified demonstrations of respect and love.

Biron perceived that the success attending the king's expedition had spread consternation among his creatures, and his treaty with Spain and Savoy was not sufficiently ripened for him to hope for immediate supplies of men and

money. The marshal, in consequence, imagined that a marked opposition to the royal will might betray his secret views: that in such case Henry would attack him arms in hand, that he was incapable of resisting, and that consequently dissimulation and obedience were the best expedients to adopt. Biron was the more convinced that there was no risk in this proceeding, as La Fin, who had rejoined him, did not conceal his having seen the king, but assured him that the prince entertained no suspicion, and that he was in the greatest surety; wherefore, upon the representations of this traitor, Biron set forward and rejoined the court of Henry.

We are informed in secret memoirs of the time, that from the period of Biron's departure from Dijon he was followed at a certain distance by armed horsemen, who had received orders to arrest him in case he should diverge from the direct route leading to Fontainebleau.

The secret had been kept so inviolably in the council, says Sully and Perefixe, that no individual at court had the most distant idea of the resolution decided upon in regard to the marshal. Far from seeking to accomplish his ruin, Henry had magnanimously resolved to grant him his pardon a second time, if, on concealing that he had proofs of his crime, he could have extorted from him an open avowal. "The king," says Sully, "still entertained towards Biron a portion of his former tenderness; he regarded him with extreme compassion; frankness

of conduct would have expiated every thing in the eyes of his master; but his pardon was only to be obtained at that price."

Upon the marshal's return to court, Henry no sooner beheld him than he advanced with a quick step, and embracing him, said, "*Cousin, you have acted wisely in coming, as otherwise I should have gone to fetch you.*"

During the conversation that took place, the king, with touching generosity, conjured him to unveil the secrets of his heart, and to make an avowal of his new alliances with Spain and Savoy, promising to forgive every thing without the least restriction, if he answered undisguisedly. Biron, fully persuaded that his master was not in possession of any absolute proofs of his guilt, proudly replied, "that he was not come to justify himself, but ascertain the names of his calumniators, in order to demand justice; and that, in case he did not obtain it, he would himself procure it." The king exhorted him in the gentlest terms to think seriously upon the subject, adding, "that he hoped reason and coöl reflection would prompt him to adopt a better decision." On quitting the king, Biron met the perfidious La Fin, who said to him as he passed, "*Courage, my master; be bold of speech, they know nothing.*" Thus was the unfortunate marshal strengthened in his resolution not to make any avowal! Henry then engaged the count de Soissons to urge the marshal to a confession of the truth; when the count, finding all attempts

to prevail upon him were vain, concluded his conversation with this wise remark: "Learn, sir, that the anger of the monarch is the messenger of death!"

At the second interview Henry was more urgent, and the marshal more obstinate in his denial and imperious in his manner. He raved furiously against his accusers; uttered a thousand protestations of innocence, accompanied by the most solemn oaths. The king heard all with the utmost patience and the most unshaken generosity; he was, however, at length confounded on hearing a falsehood maintained with so much audacity, and a sentiment of indignation began to assume the mastery over that pity which swayed his soul, and the recollection of an amity so infamously betrayed. Notwithstanding this, he was still anxious to make a new effort, and he commissioned Rosny for that purpose to address Biron. "Should he open his mind to you," said Henry, "after the confidence in me wherewith you endeavour to inspire him, give him every assurance that he may without any apprehension visit me, and confide every thing. If he disguises nothing, I again repeat it, I pledge my royal word that I will pardon him from the bottom of my heart."

Previous to the arrest of Biron some courtier remarked to the king that the marshal was an excellent player at tennis; upon which Henry observed, "It is true he plays very well, but does not know how to select his partners."

The court was still at Fontainebleau, and Rosny repaired to the marshal; when he left no expedient untried in order to soften and decide him to adopt the step required by the king; Biron, however, uniformly maintained the same language; after which Henry saw him a third time, which was the final interview. The marshal was still inflexible, persisting in a formal denial of his crime, adding, "*that it was carrying things too far thus to importune an honest man.*" Henry at length yielding to the powerful impulse of indignation, quitted him, exclaiming with a terrible emphasis, "*Well, then! since it is thus, you must elsewhere learn the truth. Adieu, adieu,* BARON DE BIRON!!" These impressive words, like the lightning forerunner of the thunderbolt that was to crush him, must have recalled to the mind of a perfidious and ungrateful subject all that his sovereign had done for him, and at the same time convinced the delinquent that he was completely stripped of his numerous titles and dignities. A few moments after, the marshal was arrested by Vitry, captain of the king's body guard, who thus addressed him: "Sir, I am commanded by his majesty to give an account of your person; surrender up your sword." Biron, confounded, requested to speak to the king. "His majesty," replied Vitry, "has retired to his closet; give me up your sword."—"Ah!" cried the marshal, "my sword, which has rendered so many services to the king!" He gave it, and was

then led to an apartment, where he remained guarded for some hours.

While the arrest of Biron was effected, the person of the count d'Auvergne was alike seized, against whom there also existed evident proofs of guilt. The marquis of Pralin awaited his coming at the gate of the palace, and said, "Sir, remain where you are; I retain you as a prisoner of the king; deliver up your sword."—"Well, there it is," said D'Auvergne, presenting the weapon, "it has never slaughtered any but wild boars."

The marshal and the count embarked on the Seine during the night, and were conducted under a strong guard to the Bastille, while the king left Fontainebleau for Paris. Three days after the marshal's imprisonment, his relatives, headed by the duke de la Force, threw themselves on their knees before Henry, and implored his clemency; to whom the monarch replied, "that the contempt with which marshal de Biron had treated his clemency, compelled him to have recourse to justice, and that the law must take its course." The duke then said to the king, "Sire, we have at least one advantage on our side, that nothing has been undertaken against your sacred person."—"Do all in your power," said the monarch, "and I will second your endeavours in his behalf."

Speaking of the marshal's situation, Henry was frequently heard to use the following language: "I am by no means desirous of the ruin of that

man, but he seeks to compass his own downfall; nevertheless do not compel me to destroy him; should you not feel convinced that he deserves death. I am anxious he should learn that if he is desirous justice alone should take her course, he need expect no grace whatsoever at my hands." Previous to delivering Biron over to his judges, the king, says Perefixe, retired to his closet in the greatest perturbation of mind, and, throwing himself on his knees, strenuously supplicated the Omnipotent to inspire him with a proper determination; a mode of conduct, adds our authority, which Henry was accustomed to adopt in all cases of great emergency, God being his surest adviser and most faithful assistant.

Henry's strict attention to the demands of justice will be fully exemplified from the perusal of the following trifling digressions:

In reply to a courtier who solicited grace for a nephew convicted of murder, Henry said, "I am pained in not being able to grant your request. It befits you well to enact the part of uncle, and me that of king: I pardon your demand, excuse therefore my refusal."

On another occasion marshal de Boisdauphin solicited pardon of Henry for a gentleman named Berthaud, who had been sentenced by the parliament to lose his head. The king had acquiesced; when the court, advertized of the fact, commissioned De Thou to represent to his majesty the consequences that might result in case the condemnation was not put into effect. Henry,

touched by the reasons of De Thou, as well as the prayers of the marshal, who was present, felt much embarrassed; but at length addressing himself to the latter, he said, "It is, no doubt, friendship towards Berthaud that impels you to speak thus in his behalf."—"Yes, sire," answered Boisdauphin.—"But," resumed the king, "may I not believe that you possess as much friendship for me as for him?"—"Oh! sire, what a comparison!" returned the marshal.—"Well, then," continued Henry, "let us give justice her free scope, since in saving Berthaud you will subject me to the loss of my honour and my soul: I already sin against the Almighty too frequently without adding the present to the catalogue." The condemnation was carried into effect, and Berthaud suffered.

The high legal authorities and the parliament were enjoined to see the process of the marshal put into effect. The mother of Biron then presented a petition, whereby she required that her son might be permitted, in the character of a soldier, and therefore little versed in legal affairs, to have counsel; but the demand was rigorously refused, upon the principle that such a step was not permitted in cases of high treason. If the widow of the first marshal de Biron had thrown herself at the monarch's feet, and supplicated grace for her son as the only consolation left her for the loss of her husband, who fell before Epernay while fighting for his sovereign, there is every reason to presume,

from the known tenor of Henry's mind, that he would not have continued deaf to a prayer of such a touching nature!

The unfortunate marshal offered a very lame defence; making dangerous confessions, which he retracted, then belying his own assertions, and flying into violent passions; so that in the end he was convicted, and obliged to allow many acts which drew upon him the penalty of death. He, however, behaved better before his judges, when conducted to the parliament, in a covered boat under a strong escort, for the purpose of receiving final judgment. The chambers were assembled, over which presided the chancellor Pompone de Bellievre. The princes and peers did not attend, although formally summoned, but whether from feelings of delicacy for the accused is not known; the circumstance was, however, construed in an opposite sense, as it was conceived the peers abandoned him. What heart could remain obdurate on beholding a man covered with so many laurels, reduced to such a state of degradation? Fallen, disarmed, surrounded by accusers and inflexible judges; instead of universal plaudits and the shouts of victory, he heard nothing but denunciations and the severest reproaches! No friend stood forward in defence of the warrior who had fought so gloriously for his king and country; not a voice was heard in his favour; even the trumpet of fame was mute; his faults alone were canvassed, and his errors brought to recollection.

On the production of witnesses, says Perefixe, and when La Fin was confronted with Biron, the latter breathed no reproach, conceiving he was a man whom nothing could prompt to deliver testimony adverse to his interests; and he therefore recognized him for a brave and loyal gentleman. But, on hearing the perusal of his deposition, he began to load him with abuse, calling him a traitor, magician, and villain; it was, however, too late, these reproaches were of no avail.

Another confident of the unfortunate marshal was one Renazé, whom he conceived to be then a prisoner in Piedmont; he had, however, escaped some days before, and was confronted with the prisoner. Biron, conceiving that a phantom stood before him, remained mute and thunderstruck, and heard his deposition in silence, which was in every respect conformable with that of La Fin. This witness, however, in addition to the previous charges, affirmed that the marshal had entered into a plot with the governor of Saint Catherine, to have the king assassinated, when he should proceed to reconnoitre that fortress, for which purpose Biron was to have accompanied the king, walking before him in a certain costume agreed upon between them, in order that his majesty might be recognized. He further deposed, that a second plan had been the carrying off the king while engaged at a hunting-party or elsewhere, being ill attended, and that he was to be immediately conducted to Spain. Biron, after all the evidence had been gone through,

pronounced the most pathetic and noble speech. He invoked the spirit of his illustrious father, comparing the glory of his death to the ignominy wherewith he was menaced. He recapitulated the battles he had fought, and the wounds he had received, in maintaining his sovereign and the state; he confessed some of his faults, denying the most criminal, and added, what was true, that his treaties with the enemy were merely projects—that no one had been ratified; that his errors were vague, and his services real; that he nevertheless confessed he stood in need of indulgence; that if his father was living, he would ask, and obtain it; but that his glorious death on the field of honour, for his country and his king, was a powerful plea for according to the heir of his titles and his dignities a generous pardon, of which he would prove himself worthy by a sincere repentance, and the most unbounded fidelity. Biron added, that he solicited grace for his mother in particular; and that it appeared to him impossible, under the reign of the most humane of monarchs, that such barbarity could exist, as to condemn the widow of a hero who expired in the cause of royalty, to witness the death of her son upon a scaffold.

This pathetic harangue produced such a powerful effect upon the auditors, that it is thought, in case the decision had taken place on the spot, Biron would have been pardoned; but, as he had spoken at great length, and there was not sufficient time for deliberation, they postponed coming

to a decision to another day; at which fatal period the marshal was sentenced to death. This fiat being delivered to the king, he postponed its fulfilment until the following day, the 31st of July 1602, and changed the place of execution (the Place de Grève) to that of the Bastille; which should not be regarded as an act of consideration to his family, as there might have been danger in publicly executing a warrior beloved by the troops, and who had reaped so much glory under his auspices.

On the day appointed for the execution of the sentence, the chancellor, accompanied by some counsellors of state and the parliament, proceeded to the Bastille; who being perceived by the marshal, the latter exclaimed, "*I am a dead man.*" Biron then manifested as much weakness as inordinate passion; evincing that he did not possess fortitude to encounter an ignominious death; having uniformly found the king so humane and generous, he had until that moment counted upon being pardoned. He then gave vent to complaints and reproaches, particularly against the perfidious La Fin, of whom he was heard to say, "*That wicked disloyal man has been my downfall; and I forfeit my life for the preservation of his.*"

It was with infinite difficulty the marshal could be prevailed upon to hear the sentence read; at length, however, he was silent, but when he heard the words "*conspiracy against the person of the king,*" he cried, "*That means nothing; it is false; strike it out;*" and he persisted until death in

affirming that he was innocent of that crime. Biron obtained a short respite by requesting Baranton, lieutenant of the marquis Praslin, to repair to Rosny, in order to intreat him to crave grace at his majesty's hands, saying, "*that he consented to undergo imprisonment between four walls, and bound with chains, so his life was spared.*" Rosny was powerfully affected, but refused to address the king; which is certainly a stain upon his memory, as one word delivered with becoming energy might have rescued the illustrious victim, and his pardon would have added fresh glory to the memory of the most illustrious monarch France has to boast.

Towards five in the evening marshal Biron was led to the scaffold, when he commissioned some persons near him to intercede with the king in behalf of his brother Saint Blancard; after which he gave vent to his former vehemence, and, beneath the ignominious axe of inexorable justice, cursed the royal hand which had deprived him of a brilliant and glorious death. As soon as the head was severed from the body, it was deposited in a coffin, and transported to the church of Saint Paul, where it was interred without any ceremony; but a prodigious concourse of people followed the remains, weeping bitterly; and on the same day the whole population of Paris repaired to the cemetery for the purpose of sprinkling holy water on the grave: an homage that sufficiently testified the general disapprobation of that rigor-

ous conduct, which had stupefied the public with excess of anguish.

The marshal, says Perefixe, was extremely ignorant, but very much given to the predictions of astrologers, diviners, and necromancers; it was asserted that La Fin acquired his unbounded confidence in making him believe he held converse with the devil, having also assured him that he would be raised to the sovereignty. It is affirmed that when young, Biron went to a fortune-teller, who had predicted that he would become a very powerful nobleman, but ultimately lose his head; at which he flew into a violent rage, and beat the prognosticator severely. That another soothsayer predicted he would be king, if the stroke of a weapon behind did not prevent it; and a third, that he would meet his death by the sword of a Burgundian, which was verified, the executioner proving to be a native of Burgundy. —Perefixe, p. 309. Another writer, describing Biron, says, he was small of stature, rather corpulent, of a dark complexion, and his hair turning grey. His physiognomy was melancholic, his conversation rude, his eyes sunk, and his head rather diminutive. He was courageous in the extreme, not over-sensible, addicted to superstition and the prognostics of astrologers. He was extravagant in his designs, fool-hardy in his conduct, and so passionately fond of gaming that he lost in one year upwards of fifteen hundred thousand crowns.

It cannot be denied but marshal Biron, by his infidelity, ingratitude, and intrigues, that were so incontestably proved, deserved the death he suffered. Prior to his being delivered over to justice, the kindness, patience, and generosity of the king were admirable; yet we must boldly say that Henry belied his general character, in suffering that man to perish on a scaffold whom he had so much cherished, whose services had been so beneficial to him, and whose father, one of his best generals, had lost his life in defence of his person and his throne. Henry, whose whole career was one scene of generosity, has in this instance only, enabled the historian to judge with severity the excessive rigour of this signal act.

We cannot refrain from adding, according to a statement in the *Journal de l'Etoile*, that Providence did not permit the wretch to go unpunished; whose vile treachery proved the downfall of his friend. Some years after, La Fin, passing over the bridge *Notre Dame*, was assassinated by a troop of horsemen, who immediately after the perpetration of the deed traversed the city at full gallop, each wielding his naked sword in one hand, and the bridle, together with a pistol, in the other, in which manner the band gained in safety the outskirts of the city, not one of whom was ever after traced.

This melancholy catastrophe did not diminish the sentiments of esteem entertained by Henry towards the illustrious house of marshal Biron. "Faults belong to the individual," said the prince

to the duke de la Force: "the constable of Saint Pol, from whom I spring; the duke de Nemours, and the constable de Bourbon, from whom I inherited; have they bequeathed less honour to their posterity? Would not my uncle the prince of Condé have been beheaded, had Francis the Second lived? For those reasons you who are relatives of marshal Biron should take no shame to yourselves, provided you continue faithful; which I am convinced will be the case; and so far am I from wishing to deprive you of your dignities, that if I had any fresh to bestow I would confer them upon you."—*Mercure François* for the year 1602.

The confiscated estates of Biron were given by the king to his brother; upon which several magistrates represented to the monarch that such donations were by no means customary, as every precaution was necessary in order to prevent similar attempts from those related to the individual who had given rise to the confiscation. "*That reasoning is very feasible,*" said the prince; "*but I trust the death of the delinquent will prove a lesson to his brother, and that my bounty will serve to attach him to my person.*"

Henry afterwards, speaking of Biron, was frequently heard to express himself in the following terms: "His obstinacy was his ruin; had he been willing to confess a truth of which I had the certainty in my possession, he would not be where he now is. I would willingly have had to pay two hundred thousand crowns, so he had but

placed it in my power to forgive him. He has served me; but I preserved his life three times."

Upon the death of marshal Biron, the king conferred the government of Burgundy upon the dauphin, and named as his lieutenant the duke de Bellegarde, pardoning all the other accomplices in the conspiracy. The fate of Biron excited additional pity when it was ascertained that the count d'Auvergne, brother of the marchioness of Verneuil, equally culpable with the unfortunate marshal, and who had never rendered any service to the state, obtained his liberty at the expiration of two months, and was restored to the monarch's good graces. This pardon, far from being ranked among the acts of clemency performed by Henry, stands in great need of justification. The king, whose veracity was never called in question, protested to Rosny that the prayers of the marchioness of Verneuil would never have procured the pardon of the count; but that Henry the Third, when dying, had particularly recommended him to his special care. The young prince de Joinville (afterwards duke de Chevreuse), son of the duchess of Guise and brother of the duke, had also engaged in this treasonable affair, solely, says the duke de Sully, because it was then the vogue to hold correspondence with the enemy, in order to be found associated with persons of high reputation and the leaders of a cabal. Joinville, who was mad-brained and full of impetuosity, having only sought to give himself the air of a man of importance, made an

ample confession to the king, who immediately summoned the duchess his mother and the duke of Guise his brother, when he thus addressed them: "Behold the prodigal son; he has indulged in fooleries; I treat him as a child, and pardon him on account of the love I bear to you and Rosny, who has supplicated me thereto with clasped hands; but it is on condition that you will all three catechise him, and that you, my nephew," added the prince, turning to the duke of Guise, "will answer for him in future. I place him under your guardianship, in order that he may acquire wisdom if it be possible."

The duplicity exercised by Spain and Savoy in regard to Biron's conspiracy, was as palpable as surprising. All the powers at peace with France, particularly England and Scotland, felicitated Henry upon the occasion, while Philip and Charles Emanuel were among the most anxious to compliment him in having so happily stifled such a dangerous conspiracy. The king, who abhorred all duplicity, publicly announced that he was fully acquainted with the active parts those two princes had taken in the affair; in answer to which they laid all the blame upon their ministers, declaring that they had acted without their knowledge; to which ridiculous apology Henry did not deign to make a reply.

During this year the ambassadors from Switzerland visited France for the purpose of renewing their alliance with the king: a ceremony performed with great pomp in the cathedral of

Notre Dame. Among the various festivities that took place on this occasion, was a repast given by the provost of the merchants and the sheriffs, who were commissioned to receive, and defray the expenses of the ambassadors and their suite. To support this expenditure the provost demanded permission of the king that a trifling impost might be levied upon the fountains of the city; when the monarch wittily made answer: "*Adopt some other expedient; it is only the province of our Saviour to change water into wine.*"

The cabal of the conspirators was entirely disconcerted by the death of marshal Biron, which had deprived it of the most powerful chief; however, there still remained the duke de Bouillon to be unmasked and punished.—Henry, for this purpose, caused letters to be forwarded, inviting that nobleman to return to court; to which the duke answered in respectful terms, at the same time eluding the proposition, and retiring to a greater distance from Paris. The king being in private with Rosny, made bitter reflections on the ingratitude of two men whom he had so long and ardently cherished, namely, marshal Biron and the duke de Bouillon. "Much is said respecting my prosperity," observed the monarch, "yet if those who pay me such compliments had uniformly been near my person from the period of my royal father's death, they would have found that there was much cause for a diminution of praise, and that my unfortunate moments have far more than

counterbalanced those of prosperity. It is not from my avowed enemies that I have suffered most, but the ingratitude and abandonment of many of those who called themselves my friends and my allies, or my subjects and servants." From these feeling complaints we may be led to infer how deeply the envenomed shaft of ingratitude had lacerated Henry's noble soul; it was even remarked that after the death of Biron the king's natural gaiety of temper was changed, and that his character, until that period so open and confiding, became on various occasions suspicious and unquiet. Nothing more plainly demonstrates such a melancholy change than a conversation which took place about this period between the monarch and Rosny; when, after descanting on the miseries incidental to monarchs, who in spite of their power can never entirely depend on their friends, Henry concluded thus: "I wish to obliterate from my mind even the shadow of a suspicion as appertains to yourself, in order that nothing may diminish the friendship I feel for you. I daily witness so many infidelities unlooked for, that I feel, in spite of myself, a rising distrust. Do not, therefore, expect that I should render you master of great cities and strong holds, which, with your credit and capacity, might enable you to do without me, and at some future period trouble the tranquillity of this kingdom, if such a wish should actuate your mind: I will not perform more for you than ought to be done for a servant, however faithful he may

be, by a king who is careful of the prosperity of his people."

This language, so novel to Rosny, at the same time excited his astonishment, and made him sad. A few minutes after, the king informed him that his salary should be augmented by sixty thousand livres a year; and then, as if anxious to console him for the degree of suspicion he had evinced towards him, he began conversing about his children, adding, that he was still anxious to increase his fortune, in order that they might be advantageously established—"Which I shall do," added the monarch, "with the greater pleasure, well knowing that you will not expend it foolishly in festivities, dogs, horses, and mistresses." From this it is obvious, that the natural generosity of Henry's soul remained unaltered; and that, although sad experience might afflict and create false alarms in his mind, it could never render it obdurate.

The king being fully sensible that sorrows of the heart find no alleviation in pleasures, but in the performance of noble actions, sought to banish from his imagination these sombre recollections by toiling incessantly for the public good; and he in consequence strove to put a stop to the rage for duelling. Henry despised this sanguinary mania, which had become so prevalent, particularly with the nobility, that duels were resorted to on the most trivial occasion, so that lives were sacrificed with a ferocity that had no parallel throughout Europe.

Brantome, in his Treatise upon Duels, says, "that the not having wounded an enemy was a stigma of shame, even after fighting with undaunted courage; and, though dying from the blows of an adversary, it was disgraceful not to have given him a wound. Two friends, says our authority, having fought; one who had received no hurt brought the other to the ground, who lay weltering in his blood; upon which his adversary, actuated by pity, ran to raise him up and yield assistance. The wounded man, believing that he was on the point of death, conjured his opponent in the name of their former friendship, that he would extend his courtesy so far as to counterfeit his having been wounded, and carry his arm for a few days in a sling. The victor acquiesced; and proceeded *to smear himself with the blood of his adversary*, binding an handkerchief round his arm, and stating that he had been lacerated in the course of the duel. The wounded individual, however, subsequently recovered, when the two gentlemen renewed their former amity, and continued firmly attached during the residue of their lives."

Towards the conclusion of the year Henry ratified an edict whereby he prohibited duelling and challenges, equally without as in the interior of the kingdom, under pain of death and confiscation of property, as well for the seconds as the principals concerned; ordering that the trial should be carried on in memory of those who fell in such encounters, &c. This law was

in the first instance productive of the greatest benefit; but the edict was by degrees disregarded. Persons in power obtained indulgences that were detrimental to the public, so that the law coming into disuse, the edict was divested of its salutary effects.

In the *Journal de l'Etoile* we find it was made known to the king that from the period of his accession to the throne, until 1608, no less than four thousand gentlemen were killed in duels. Louis the Thirteenth renewed the laws of his father, Henry the Fourth; and Louis the Fourteenth repressed duels with even more severity and success.

At the commencement of 1603, the Genoese, who had been taken under Henry's protection, sent ambassadors to solicit his aid against the duke of Savoy, who sought to oppress them. The king became a mediator in this affair, which was concluded to the satisfaction of the Genoese by the treaty of Saint Julien. At the same period Henry appeased the troubles which had arisen in the Messin territory. The duke d'Epernon, governor of Metz and all the surrounding country, had nominated for his lieutenants, two brothers named Soboles or Souboles, of the house of Comminges; who abused their power to such a degree, that the inhabitants of the city and country laid their complaints before Epernon. The duke in consequence visited the territories, where he experienced no submission from the two brothers, who were supported by a party

fully enabled to resist the governor and the citizens. In this extremity the duke, although with regret, found himself compelled to have recourse to the royal authority; upon which, Henry in person set forward for the city of Metz. On his arrival nothing was talked of but submission; the Soboles surrendered up the citadel without exacting any conditions, and abandoned the country. The king then appointed Montigny lieutenant of the province; the old garrison was replaced by other troops; and the duke d'Epernon was left with the appointments and title of governor, without being vested with any real authority.

During the king's residence at Metz several German princes visited that city to offer their respects, renew alliances with the prince, and request him to arbitrate in different matters that had arisen between them. Henry pacified their differences, and regulated their respective pretensions with that uprightness and wisdom which uniformly characterized his proceedings. From Metz the king journeyed to Nancy, in order to visit his sister the duchess of Bar, and regulate some affairs with the duke of Lorraine; after which he returned to Paris; where he learned the death of Elizabeth of England. The king was much afflicted at this event, having entertained the greatest friendship and duly appreciated the talents of that able princess; and upon that occasion he wrote to Rosny, stating, *he had lost in her the irreconcilable enemy of his irrecon-*

cilable enemies (alluding to the Spaniards), *and his second self*. Elizabeth, as we have before stated, was closely allied with Henry the Fourth, whom she had on various occasions supplied with men and money during the times of his greatest need. She, however, experienced some diminution of esteem for this prince upon his abandonment of the protestant persuasion: the following being her letter to the monarch on that momentous occasion.

" Mon Dieu; qu'elle cuisante douleur! qu'elle tristesse n'ai-je pas ressentie, au récit que Morland m'a annoncé! Où est la foi des hommes! Quel siècle est celui-ci! Est-il possible qu'un avantage mondain vous ait obligé de vous departir de la crainte de Dieu! pouvons-nous attendre une bonne issue d'une telle action? Ne pensez-vous pas que celui qui vous a conservé jusqu'ici par sa puissance, vous abandonnera maintenant? Il-y-a une multitude de dangers à faire du mal, afin qu'il en arrive du bien. J'espère pourtant qu'un meilleur esprit vous inspirera une meilleure pensée. Je ne laisserai pas de vous recommander à la protection de Dieu, et de le prier de faire ensorte que les mains d'Esaü ne corrompent pas les bénédictions de Jacob. Pour ce qui regarde l'amitié que vous m'offrez comme à votre bonne Sœur, je sais que je l'ai méritée, et certes à un grand prix; et je ne m'en repentirois pas, si vous n'aviez pas changé de Père. Mais d'ici en avant je ne puis plus être Sœur de Père; car j'aimerais toujours plus

chèrement celui qui m'est propre, que celui qui vous a adopté. Dieu le connoit, et je le prie de vous ramener dans un meilleur chemin. *Signé*, Votre bonne Sœur à la vieille mode. Je n'ai que faire de la nouvelle. ELIZABETH."

From this letter it is obvious that the queen seriously loved Henry the Fourth, and that she was truly afflicted at his apostacy. His ratification of peace with Spain tended to increase her uneasiness, because she had not sufficiently reflected on the political state of France, and the character of the nation at that period, which stood in need of a government widely different from that established in our own country; but when she became aware of the wisdom of Henry's measures, she honoured him with all her former friendship, which continued unabated to the end of her existence.

Immediately after the demise of Elizabeth, Henry despatched Rosny on an embassy to James the First, upon which occasion the former experienced great difficulties in concluding a new treaty of alliance. Notwithstanding this, however, the acumen of the minister prevailed over all obstacles; for Rosny obtained, and caused to be signed, the treaty required by Henry; upon which he immediately returned to France.

At this period, the king, yielding to the prayers of the Jesuits, consented to their being re-established in France; upon which occasion he granted an audience to the father provincial of that order, and three brothers, in his study.

They knelt before the monarch, who raised them, and listened attentively to the provincial's address; to which he replied with his wonted urbanity, requesting that he would send for father Cotton, in whose praise he had heard much, and then added, "*I am desirous of having you, for I conceive that you are of utility to the public and the state.*" The prince then dismissed them, having cordially embraced the four brothers.

The king having entirely pacified his kingdom, established order in the financial department; eased his people from the burthen of several vexatious imposts, secured a peace with foreign powers, and successfully protected his friends and allies, put a climax to his glory by new undertakings, which would have alone sufficed to immortalize his memory. He, at his own expense, completed the Pont Neuf, which had been commenced under the auspices of his predecessor Henry the Third; he re-established on the different rivers the various bridges that had been destroyed during the wars; by his orders the greatest activity was resorted to in repairing the public roads; he began the canal of Briare, intended to form a junction between the Seine and the Loire, for the conveyance of merchandize from the upper provinces of the kingdom; he had also drawn out the plan of a canal that was to form a junction between the two seas, a work which would have been undertaken if Heaven had longer preserved him on the throne; he

caused the galleries to be built in front of the river, which unite the Louvre to the Tuileries; he placed workmen to construct the grand hall of the Louvre, at present known as the *Salle des Antiques;* adding also considerably to the pile of building called the arsenal; he founded the chateau of Saint Gèrmain, enlarged the gardens, and raised the terraces; he reinstated the royal stud, which he found completely broken up; and planted at Montpelier the first botanical garden which had been established in France. Previous to the reign of Henry the Fourth, there existed no French marine, so that when it was necessary to transport troops by sea, or attempt some nautical expedition, which was very uncommon, government was necessitated to hire merchant vessels, which were armed accordingly; and to Henry the Fourth France was consequently indebted for the formation of her marine force.

Notwithstanding the opinions, and even the opposition, of the austere Rosny, sworn enemy of luxury, all the inventions in furtherance of which he denominated children's toys; the king established several new manufactories in France, and, among others, those of gold and silver stuffs. By his order the increase of silkworms was attended to, and mulberry trees were planted in abundance. Under this prince's reign mirrors were first cast and polished; he also founded the college of La Fleche, two classes of theology at the Sorbonne, and perfected the statutes of that university; and at a subsequent period will be

explained the measures adopted by this great monarch for the advancement of sciences and arts.

In the course of this year the king, being at Fontainebleau, was seized by a malady to which he had before been subject, whereby his life was placed in imminent danger; and at the commencement of this attack he wrote the following letter to Rosny: "My friend, I find myself so ill, that there is every appearance the Almighty intends to take me to himself. Consequently, as it is requisite, after the care of my soul, that I should attend to the necessary arrangements as regard the succession of my children, that they may reign prosperously, and to the benefit of my queen, my state, my faithful servants, and my poor people, whom I love as my dear children, I am anxious to consult with you upon all those points: come, therefore, to me immediately; let me see you this day."

Rosny, overcome by the keenest anguish, set off on the instant, and, on arriving at Fontainebleau, found the king in bed, the queen sitting beside him, and holding one of his majesty's hands within her own. Henry, presenting the other to his friend, said, "Come and embrace me, I am singularly glad to behold you; it is a most extraordinary circumstance that two hours after I had written to you, I felt a diminution of my acute pains, which are subsiding by degrees. There," continued Henry, turning towards the queen, "is the servant throughout my whole

kingdom who is the most honest, careful, and intelligent, and who would have best served you as well as my children, had you been deprived of my protection. I know that his temper is rather austere, and sometimes a little too free for a mind nurtured like yours, and that there might have been officious persons, who upon that account would have done him evil offices with you and my children, in order to cause his removal; but, if ever such an event should happen, and you should apply to" (the king then placing his lips to the ear of the queen, whispered the names of some persons) "and give them your unlimited confidence, instead of being guided by that man, you would infallibly overthrow the affairs of the state, perhaps of the kingdom, my offspring, and yourself; I sent for him on purpose, in order to consult with you and him as to the means requisite to prevent such a calamity: but, praises be to God! I find that for the present there is no need of any such precautions." It may not be amiss to remark, that this prediction of Henry was in the end partly verified after that monarch's fatal death.

At the opening of this year the king learned that his sister Catherine de Bourbon, duchess of Bar, had departed this world; an event that caused him the greatest affliction. During the first week he admitted no visitors, issuing his commands that he wished to be private, as *he could only find consolation with the Almighty;* causing the windows and doors to be closed, in order

that he might shed his tears unobserved. The court and all the foreign ambassadors went into mourning, with the exception of the pope's nuncio, under pretext that the princess died in the Calvinist persuasion; upon which Henry sent word that he did not wish him to adopt mourning, but that he would not admit him until the period of wearing it was elapsed. The nuncio after this adopted mourning, and obtained an audience, at which, instead of sympathizing with the king for his loss, he spoke of the regret which the pope experienced on account of the perdition of that princess's soul. Henry, justly indignant and irritated on hearing a conversation so misplaced, replied with warmth, "that to think worthily of Omnipotence, we ought to believe it possible, that at the moment when the soul is abandoning the body, a ray of Divine light may illumine the spirit of the most sinful, and place it in a situation to enter the kingdom of Heaven. I will not suffer any one in my presence to utter a doubt respecting the salvation of my sister." The nuncio felt conscious of his fault, offered excuses; and the king appeared satisfied.

From the period of Charlemagne the kingdom of France had never been in so flourishing a state as it was at this time. The state enjoyed a permanent peace; Henry, feared and respected by his enemies, was cherished by his people, as well as his allies, and stood forth the arbitrator for his neighbours. The finances were in such a flourishing

condition that the debts were liquidated, and sufficient sums collected to answer any unlooked for emergencies: notwithstanding this, the monarch was not happy; his grand qualities insured public prosperity, but his weaknesses embittered his social comforts. The intrigues, caprices, and ambition of the marchioness de Verneuil; the acrimony, littleness of character, and jealousy of the queen, of which we shall have occasion to speak in the ensuing chapter; the insolence of the Italian favourites of that princess, and their insatiable cupidity, increased the king's chagrin the more poignantly, as they were incessantly renewed. When the monarch, fatigued with the importance of state affairs, quitted his council or his study, he found in the person of his consort a dissatisfied and frequently an angry partner; he heard nothing but complaints and reproaches: in another direction, it became necessary to endure the inequalities of his mistress's temper, combined with her pride, and scenes that were frequently of the most violent nature. It is true, Henry possessed a friend, but he was a rigorous censor; and the prince was beforehand well aware that his confidence would only produce exhortations and severe remonstrances. The queen and the marchioness de Verneuil, equally extravagant, dispensed at a very dear rate the transitory sunshine of their smiles. Henry, to obtain peace, granted every thing that was required; but Rosny very frequently refused acquiescence: upon which the king became angry, while the queen and the

marchioness gave vent to their rage, the latter frequently threatening to immure herself in a convent. Rosny then conceived he was in disgrace, which his enemies laboured to effect; while the monarch, on his side, was more pained at any misunderstanding with his friend than all the other disquietudes that assailed him. The queen being one day unable to procure a sum for a grand festivity which she had determined to give in the country *in honour of the nuptials of her gardener, in a fit of spite placed her jewels in pledge,* which Rosny was compelled to free on the instant. Henry, upon another occasion, wishing to bestow a very considerable sum on the marchioness, previous to speaking to Rosny, and for the purpose of putting him in a good temper, intimated his intention of conferring a gratuity on that minister. This preparative, however, did not seduce the honest friend, which his master might have expected; a trait that paints with extreme *naïveté* the dreadful embarrassments to which the prince was incessantly subjected between a friend so discreet and a mistress so avaricious and unreasonable.

Henry, one day conversing with Sully respecting the torments he endured from his queen, said, " I experience on the part of my wife neither society, amusement, nor content; she is neither complaisant in her manners, nor gentle in her conversation; in short, she neither accommodates herself to my manners, my humour, nor my will. When I enter my palace,

and seek to converse familiarly with her, and I approach to caress her, she welcomes me with such a cold repulsive air, that I am forced to leave her in disgust, and fly to experience consolation elsewhere; my cousin Guise proves my only refuge when she chances to be at the Louvre, although she frequently utters very home truths; but it is done with so good a grace that I never feel offended, and only laugh with her in return." To draw a contrast, the king would then amuse Rosny by delineating his mistress; he extolled the delights he experienced in her society, dwelt upon the charms of her conversation, the *naïveté* of her wit, and the vivacity and keenness of her repartees, when she was not occupied by an excess of passion or the slave of caprice.

Sully states that he never witnessed a week transpire without some quarrel taking place between the monarch and his queen; and once, in particular, the passion of her majesty was carried to such a pitch, that being near the king, she raised her hand, upon which the latter, apprehensive lest she should so far forget herself as to strike him, was under the necessity of quieting her with less respect than he had desired, and indeed so rudely that the queen subsequently affirmed he had struck her.

Amidst these incessant storms it is not surprising that the king should have sought to amuse his mind at play, a failing with which he has justly been reproached. *Bassompierre*, speaking on this subject, says, "that they gamed very

deep at Fontainebleau; scarcely a day transpired without upwards of twenty thousand pistoles being either lost or won;" and the authority in question adds, "that he for his own part gained five hundred thousand livres in one year. The queen also played for immense sums, and her losses were frequently very heavy."

In consequence of the base ingratitude of which this reign affords too many instances, the count d'Auvergne, brother of the marchioness de Verneuil, who had been pardoned for his treasonable practices with marshal Biron, renewed all his connexions with the Spanish court, and entered into a new conspiracy. By this treaty the latter power undertook to furnish men and money, in order to place the count's nephew, Henry de Bourbon, on the throne, who was natural son of the king and his mistress, and named dauphin of France, and legitimate heir to the throne in the document so ratified. This extravagant idea originated in the conditional promise of marriage before mentioned, which had been invalidated by the miscarriage of the marchioness during the first year, who, according to the stipulation, was to present Henry with a boy within the twelve months. The king's mistress eagerly joined in this conspiracy; pride and disappointed ambition having left in her soul no sentiment towards her royal lover but hatred, and a hope to succeed in this project, as ridiculous as it was chimerical. The agents, however, despatched to Spain by D'Auvergne were stopped, and incon-

testable proofs of the plot were placed in the monarch's hands. The count, in consequence, fled to the fortress of Vic in the midst of a forest, taking every precaution to escape being seized. He was, however, soon after secured by stratagem, and conducted under a strong escort to the Bastille, together with his father-in-law, D'Entragues, the marchioness de Verneuil being confined to her own house, and guarded by a knight named Guet.

This affair, by command of the king, was referred to the parliament, and proceedings were followed up with the greatest activity against that ambitious family. The proofs were so incontestable, that the accused were not able to dispute a single charge; and, in consequence, on the 1st of February, 1605, the parliament decreed that Charles de Valois, count d'Auvergne, and François de Balzac d'Entragues, stood attainted of high treason, and, for conspiring against the king and state, were condemned to lose their heads; and that Henrietta de Balzac, marchioness de Verneuil, should be immured in the monastery of Beaumont les Tours.

The king commuted the capital punishment against the count and his father-in-law to perpetual imprisonment; their estates were not confiscated, but he dispossessed them of their governments and places. Some time after, D'Entragues was liberated, with permission to remain at his estate of Malsherbes.

The countess d'Auvergne, says the journalist of

Henry the Fourth, bathed in tears, as meek and humble as the marchioness de Verneuil was haughty, threw herself at the king's feet, imploring pardon for her husband; upon which Henry, having cordially raised and saluted her, thus expressed himself: "I commiserate your sufferings and your tears; but, were I to grant your supplication, it would be requisite," continued the monarch, taking his queen by the arm) "that my wife should be reputed a w——, my son a bastard, and my kingdom become a prey to discord." The same lady, having the king's permission to hold correspondence with her husband, sent to demand what he might want; to which he replied, "Send me good cheese and mustard, and you may trouble yourself about nothing further."

The count d'Auvergne, says Perefixe, stripped of his lands and dignities, continued immured in the Bastille until 1616; at which period Mary de Medicis, requiring his assistance in consequence of some disturbances, gave him his freedom, and caused his judgment to be reversed, and was further desirous that every document should be erased from the parliamentary registers which preserved the record of his crime.

Henry permitted the marchioness to retire to her possessions until more ample research should be made; and seven months after, she was pronounced innocent, but upon condition that she would continue on her estates.

Previous to the marchioness receiving the

king's decision, she sent to acquaint her royal lover that she was reckless about life, and rather desired to die; but that, if his majesty condemned her, it would always be said he had murdered his wife; that she was queen before *the other*; and finally, that she only required three things—a pardon for her father, a rope for her brother, and justice towards herself.

Madame de Genlis, in order to palliate as much as possible the weakness of Henry's conduct in regard to his mistress, states in her history, that the king, from the period in question, broke off all further connexion with the marchioness de Verneuil. So far, however, is this from the truth, that the monarch uniformly continued his connexion, though more secretly; and was so infatuated as to remain the slave of that imperious and designing woman, although her conduct on various occasions was such as to have merited the severest punishment which injured royalty could inflict.

In consequence of the frequent conversations that took place between Rosny and his master on the subject of the king's family disputes, that faithful minister, at different periods, advised Henry to send Galigai from court; but the natural kindness of the prince, and the fear of increasing his wife's ill humour by depriving her of that favourite, uniformly prevented his adopting such a line of conduct.

It was at this period that the queen acquired a knowledge of the promise of marriage given by

Henry to mademoiselle d'Entragues, of which Rosny had destroyed the original; and although it might easily be ascertained that the document in question was null and void, yet the queen allowed her husband no repose until he had promised to procure its return. The king, anxious to coincide with the wishes of his consort, resolved to demand that instrument of his mistress; but he found her far from willing to accede. She, on the contrary, became furious at the request, reproaching the monarch in the bitterest terms; and even went so far as to speak of the queen in the most insulting terms.

The king at length unable to endure so much impertinence, flew into a violent rage, and retired, swearing never more to behold the marchioness, adding, that he would soon force her to yield the writing in question.

After this occurrence it might have been reasonably supposed that Henry would entirely have abandoned such a woman; yet, notwithstanding his resolution, supported by the vigorous representations of Rosny, who pointed out the melancholy consequences likely to result, one moment sufficed to make the monarch forget every thing, and revive his love for that artful female. His passion was so violent that he neither possessed the courage nor inclination to master it; so that, at the very time when he was most enraged, one word from the marchioness was enough to calm and make him abandon all the wise resolutions previously resolved upon.

According to *De Thou*, the king during this year compassed the return of the promise of marriage, which had caused him so much chagrin; but, in order to succeed, he was compelled to give the marchioness de Verneuil twenty thousand crowns in ready money, and to promise the staff of French marshal to her father the count d'Entragues, although that nobleman had never been upon the field of battle.

Scarcely had the monarch terminated these disagreeable affairs, when he was subjected to new chagrin. In consequence of a cabal most adroitly carried on against Rosny, that tried and faithful friend of royalty became suspected by his master; for, notwithstanding the wisdom and uprightness of the king, he was even led to apprehend that his minister had been guilty of treasonable practices against him.

Rosny had some suspicion of a plot being meditated, and that his enemies had gained the royal ear; of which he soon after became convinced. He in consequence wrote to his master in vague terms, requesting an explanation; to this he received a very cool reply: the letter was not penned by the king; the customary word *friend* was expunged, and that of *cousin* inserted in its place. Rosny, although wounded to the heart, made no reply; but, calculating on his integrity, continued to labour for the public good. The minister was constantly occupied with his master, who conversed on nothing but business; their reciprocal coolness, therefore,

struck every one; and the general opinion was that Rosny would soon be dismissed for ever. His enemies in consequence redoubled their machinations, in order to persuade Henry that his minister was planning a conspiracy in conjunction with Epernon. Time, however, continued to wear away, and no proofs appeared, so that the monarch began to entertain doubts respecting the truth of the charges. The court was then at Fontainebleau; and Rosny, having one day occasion to set out for Paris, presented himself to receive his master's commands, whom he found surrounded by his courtiers, and putting on his boots preparatory to joining a hunting-party. No sooner had he entered, than Henry, half rising from the seat, and with only one leg booted, said, "*Good day, sir,*" instead of the accustomed phrase, "*my friend Rosny.*" Yet, as he assumed a thoughtful air, and delivered himself in a low tone, Rosny well knew that this conduct was not the result of anger. The minister made a very low obeisance; and Henry afterwards told him that "his solemn and ceremonious reverence had so affected his heart, that it was with difficulty he had refrained from throwing his arms round his neck." The king continued thoughtful for some moments, and then remarked to Beringhen "that the weather was not fine enough to hunt;" and ordered his boot to be taken off. The attendant, astonished, remarked, "that the weather was, on the contrary, very fine;" which was the fact. "No, do

as I bid you," replied the king, with obvious impatience, "I will not ride out, take off my boot." He was obeyed; when the monarch proceeded to talk upon topics which he imagined would engage Rosny in conversation; but, finding that he maintained a respectful silence, he took Bellegarde by the hand, saying, "I am desirous, my first equerry, to speak with you:" upon which he led the duke to the further end of the study, and, on turning his back towards Rosny, commanded one of the attendants to keep his eye upon the minister, and in case he should testify any signs of going, to give him timely notice. Rosny continued stationary, observing that his master from time to time turned his head a little and eyed him over his shoulder. Bellegarde took his leave, when Rosny advanced to know if the king had any orders for him. "Where are you going?" said the monarch. "To Paris, sire, respecting affairs on which your majesty consulted me two days ago." "It is perfectly right," resumed Henry, "I entreat you will never cease to mind my affairs and love me sincerely;" and upon this he embraced his friend as of old, which he had not done for a month previous. Rosny retired, but in a few seconds was recalled by his master's order; who stepped up to meet him, exclaiming, "Come, why how now? have you, then, nothing to say to me?" "Not for the present, sire," returned Rosny. "*Well, but I have much to say to you,*" said Henry, with emotion, and then taking him by

the hand, led him to *the avenue of white mulberries:* such are Sully's words. The king then stationed at the entrance of the plantation two of his Swiss guards who could not speak French, that he might neither be interrupted nor heard by a group of chagrined courtiers near at hand, but who, being enabled to observe what passed, attentively eyed every motion of their master. *The prince began by embracing Rosny two separate times in the most affectionate manner*, and then, giving scope to his emotion, said, "that the cold reserve they had mutually testified towards each other for a month past, must be afflicting to individuals accustomed during twenty-three years to hide nothing from each other; that it was time such constraint should cease; and that those who were the cause should no longer have occasion to indulge their malicious joy."

"The heart of that good king," says Sully, "expanded as he spoke;" and he then continued by observing, that he was determined, after that interview, no trace of discontent should be observable in either; and that therefore it was requisite a reciprocal promise should be made of frankness and unbounded confidence. "My will is," continued he, "that we quit this spot, both you and I, with our hearts clean from all suspicion, and fully satisfied with one another: there is, however, one thing remaining,—as I am on the point of unburthening my heart, disguise nothing from me that is in your's."

Rosny pledged his honour most sacredly;

upon which the king named all his calumniators, among whom were four courtiers, then promenading around the mulberry plantation, who, anxiously observing the scene, must have been petrified when they beheld the monarch draw from his pocket the long string of charges they had alleged against the minister. This document Henry consigned to Rosny's hand, who, on perusing the infamous calumnies, was greatly astonished to find, that a prince so enlightened should not have observed that the paper was filled with the most impertinent statements as regarded his majesty. Among other assertions of a similar nature, it was affirmed, *that Rosny, under the mask of pretended compensations for old debts, rendered the king avaricious and unjust towards those who had faithfully served him.* Henry, however, preoccupied with the accusations preferred against his friend, had never paid attention to the want of respect as regarded himself, which the paper contained. The minister spoke in turn, and justified himself from the ignoble aspersions with so much simplicity and uprightness, that nothing remained in the breast of Henry but bitterness and shame, for having even doubted the faith of his friend. Rosny concluded by uttering protestations of inviolable faith, and recalling to his master's remembrance the tender expressions of zeal and attachment to his prince, which had never ceased to vibrate in his heart. During Rosny's speech Henry listened attentively, and the effects of encreasing tenderness became legibly imprinted

on his features; and having concluded, the prince's words were so touching, that Rosny sought to embrace his knees; this, however, the monarch would not permit, apprehensive lest the courtiers should infer that he was craving pardon. Henry, therefore, embraced him several times, adding, "that he should never call to mind any thing that had transpired, but feel the weighty obligations whereby he was bound to love him better than ever." The minister concludes this interesting detail in the following manner.

"Many others, in my situation, would only have thought, after such a disclosure, of dealing vengeance upon those whom the king had made known to me as my enemies. Praise be to Heaven, I never for one moment entertained such a thought; I scrupulously concealed their names from my secretaries; neither shall they be published here. The example they have given me of contrary sentiments, will never obliterate the opinion I entertain, that vengeance of such a nature is unworthy a noble heart."

The king, on quitting the plantation, took Rosny by the hand, and approaching the courtiers, inquired the hour; upon which he was told it was one o'clock, and that he had walked a long time. "I see how it is," said the prince, in a tone of voice that turned many visages present pale with fear: "there are some to whom the time has appeared longer than to me; but I am desirous of telling you all that I love Rosny more than ever, and that between us two it is

a matter of life and death. And as for you, my friend," continued the monarch, addressing Rosny, "go your way and dine, love and serve me as you have ever been accustomed to do: I am perfectly contented." The following morning the king, in presence of the whole court, said aloud, "My friend, you can form no idea of the sound sleep I last night enjoyed, from having explained matters, and unveiled to you my heart."

"The public undertakings of this year," says Sully, "will be an eternal monument of Henry's glory. He painted, and decorated with gold, the chapel of Fontainebleau, and made rides throughout the forest: in Paris the square Dauphine, and the street so called, were built; as well as several of the quays. The royal residences were repaired, sumptuously decorated, and newly furnished; churches, convents, and hospitals, were endowed; the strong holds of the kingdom were fortified; numerous vessels were fitted out for the Mediterranean; the magazines and arsenals were completely stored, and precious stones were added to the jewels of the crown. Payments required within the kingdom and beyond the frontiers, were liquidated on demand; and yet, after such enormous disbursements, there remained a large sum at the close of the year, which was deposited in the Bastille." The king enjoyed at heart the benefits he showered upon others; and it was while calling to mind the useful labours of this year, that he

repeated these well-known words: "*Yes, I will so manage matters that the poorest peasant in my realm shall eat meat each day in the week; and moreover, be enabled to put a fowl in the pot every Sunday.*"

The Calvinists uniformly dissatisfied and averse to peace, formed some plots in the course of this year, and demanded the king's permission to hold an assembly at La Rochelle. Henry, aware of their cabals, named for that purpose Chatelleraut, a town of Poitou, of which Rosny was governor, appointing that minister to preside at the assembly. The integrity of Rosny was so well known, that the catholics approved of the choice; and the Calvinists did not dare complain, though much disconcerted at the idea of being placed under the inspection of a man equally enlightened, impartial, and incorruptible. In his way to Chatelleraut, Rosny took the route to Orleans; and in his passage through Cercote, had an interview with queen Margaret, who communicated much useful information respecting the intrigues of the factious Huguenots. Although the duke de Bouillon had fled from France, he secretly fomented his party, as well as Duplessis Mornay, who by such reprehensible conduct forfeited the surname of *Wise*, which had been attached to his character. Rosny, however, by his vigilance and wisdom, counteracted the views of the evil disposed, and thus preserved the kingdom from the horrors of a new intestine warfare, which was

too obviously intended by the machinations of the ambitious.

About this period the conspiracy of baron Meyrargues came to light, by which it was intended to deliver Marseilles to the Spaniards. The baron, together with his secretary, was arrested; "an event," says Perefixe, "that occasioned many discussions respecting the rights of nations," which were decided by Henry in the following manner.

"Ambassadors being held sacred by the rights of nations, they, on that very account, are the first to violate such privileges, when they conspire to overthrow a state, or plot against the prince to whom they are despatched by their masters; consequently such right does not shield them from punishment when they are found guilty. Besides, it is not to be presumed that they are ambassadors and represent the sovereigns who depute them, when they are guilty of meannesses and infidelities, which their employers would neither commit nor sanction."

Henry, however, had the generosity to give liberty to the secretary, though fully convicted of the crime; but baron Meyrargues, being subjected to trial, was condemned and executed. On the very day when the sentence was carried into effect, the king narrowly escaped assassination. While traversing the Pont Neuf, a man having rushed through the royal guard, darted upon the monarch, whom he seized by the cloak, forcing him down on the crupper of the saddle,

and would have despatched him on the instant, had he not been seized by some of the royal escort. The name of this regicide was John de Lille, a native of Vimeux, near Senlis, upon whose person was found a bayonet, with which he intended to commit the deed. When subjected to an interrogatory before president Jeanin, he elicited from the former nothing but the most extravagant answers, being completely out of his mind. He believed himself monarch of the universe, stating that Henry the Fourth had usurped the crown of France, and therefore deserved chastisement at his hands. Henry, in consequence, commanded that he should not suffer death: the delinquent was therefore consigned to perpetual imprisonment, and he died a short time after.

During the present year Rome witnessed three occupants of the papal chair: Clement the Eighth, who expired, universally regretted, on the 3d of March, was, on account of his virtues, gentleness, and wisdom, greatly regretted by the king. He was succeeded by Alexander de Medicis, a relative of the queen, who had been legate in France, where he was admired for his rare talents. This pontiff died on the 25th day after his nomination, and was replaced by Camillus Borghèse, who assumed the name of Paul the Fifth.

During the last four years the duke de Bouillon had continued a resident in Germany, having uniformly fomented the troubles that had arisen

in France among the Calvinists. Henry had possessed himself of the principality of Turenne; but the fortress of Sedan, which was deemed impregnable, still belonged to the duke. The king, who had in vain solicited the prince's return upon honourable conditions, at length resolved to reduce him by force, and he in consequence issued the necessary orders to the duke of Sully. (It was by that title Rosny was then known, whose estates had been created into a duchy, and himself elevated to the French peerage.) Henry was desirous of placing himself at the head of his army by the beginning of spring; but he experienced great opposition in his council, and among his nobility; for the duke de Bouillon had many friends at court. In consequence of this, the advantageous situation of Sedan, and its strong fortifications, were exaggerated; as it was pretended that upwards of three years would be occupied in its reduction, even supposing the place could be taken. Henry, in consequence, became irresolute; and Sully, who had uniformly instigated his master to invest the fortress, was accused of acting only from personal pique against the duke de Bouillon, and on this account Sully from that period observed a uniform silence on the subject. Henry, who noticed this taciturnity, conceived that reflection had led his minister to fear the result of the enterprise; and the king, in consequence, had an explanation with Sully; the result of which was, that another amicable negotiation

with the duke de Bouillon should be attempted, through the medium of the princess of Orange, towards whom Henry entertained the greatest friendship, while Bouillon was connected with her by the closest bonds of relationship. This princess was the daughter of admiral Coligny; she first espoused the count de Teligny, killed at the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and then married William of Nassau, prince of Orange, whose widow she was at the period in question.

The duke de Bouillon could not be brought to terms; however, during the superfluous negotiations which in consequence took place, Sully found means to procure an exact plan of Sedan, which the king, accompanied by a train of courtiers, went to inspect at the arsenal. The latter, as usual, maintained that the fortress was impregnable, except by famine; happily, however, the monarch being now as well convinced as Sully, that the reduction of the place could be accomplished, determined on laying the siege as speedily as possible.

The design of attacking the duke de Bouillon, naturally made the Calvinists murmur; the duke had even imagined that a general rising in his favour would be the result; a very simple precaution, however, prevented that misfortune.—Sully wrote to a Calvinist upon the subject; and under pretext of communicating with him confidentially and in friendship, entered into a long detail of every thing Henry had done to obviate such a result. This communication, as Sully

had expected, was made public, and produced all the good effect that wise minister had hoped to reap from the measure.

Henry left Fontainebleau towards the end of March; "and it was obvious," says Sully, "that the heart of the monarch was cheered, and that the former ardour rekindled in his countenance on flying to pursue his first martial employment." The king, on his route, amused himself with hunting; and upon one occasion wrote to Sully, saying, "*that he had missed the stag, but taken two wolves, which he regarded as a favourable omen.*" Henry took the route through Rheims, where he remained to perform the festival of Easter, being joined by all the noblemen of the surrounding territory.

The duke de Bouillon having no supplies capable of opposing such a force as the king led on, lost no time in tendering his submission; upon which occasion the prince, as usual, displayed unbounded clemency, and deigned to ratify a treaty with the duke de Bouillon, which bore this title—*Articles for the protection of Sedan and Raucourt.*

The duke undertook to surrender up Sedan and its fortress, on condition that Henry would grant a general amnesty, and receive him into his good graces. Bouillon, in consequence, joined his master at Donchery, where he threw himself at his feet, craving forgiveness for the past. The king, sensibly affected by these demonstrations of repentance, raised the duke;

pressed him to his bosom, and, discarding every recollection of such a culpable rebellion, regarded the prince only in the light of an old friend, and conducted himself with as much cordiality as if he had never for a moment swerved from his duty.

No sooner was Henry master of Sedan, than he wrote the following letter to the princess of Orange:

"My cousin, I shall say with Cæsar, *Veni, vidi, vici*—I came, I saw, I conquered; or as the song has it—

> "During three days my love did last,
> And in three days the passion pass'd."

So much was I enamoured of Sedan! you may now learn whether I am correct or not, and if I was better acquainted with the state of that place than those who sought to make me believe that I should not be able to conquer it in three years."

Henry, who was never satisfied in adopting half measures when they related to generosity, restored Sedan to the duke de Bouillon one month after; and as many persons disapproved of such excess of confidence, the king, to excuse his liberality, stated, that he rather loved to see the duke at Sedan, than a resident at the German courts.

The king returned to his capital by slow stages, being compelled to procrastinate his journey, that he might witness the benedictions of his

people, who flocked in crowds upon his route. He was incessantly retarded or followed, not for the purpose of receiving petitions, for his paternal affection, had anticipated the desires of his children, by ensuring their felicity. The countrymen and the labourers only crowded round him to utter their thanks, to load him with blessings, to hear his cherished voice, and bear in their memories those expressions of boundless generosity and kindness, which were to become the everlasting traditions of the hamlet and the cottage!

The city of Paris, actuated by a similar impulse of enthusiastic love, sent deputies to entreat that the king would re-enter the walls of his capital in a manner worthy of his power and prosperity. In order to afford the Parisians an opportunity of gratifying their desires, the king left La Roquette, where he partook of a trifling repast, at an early hour. On entering the suburbs of St. Anthony, several discharges of artillery were heard from the Bastille and the arsenal, which had been previously ordered by Sully, for the purpose of announcing the monarch's approach; upon which the whole population, as with one unanimous voice, exclaimed, "*There is the king!*" All the manufactories were abandoned, the houses became deserted, except by the infirm, who remained to offer up prayers to Omnipotence for their common parent! All the streets through which Henry passed were decorated with hangings of tapestry, and the pave-

ment covered with flowers; the citizens, in their best attire, lined the route, and the ladies, in splendid habiliments, graced the windows. The monarch, seated on a milk-white charger, was preceded by upwards of eight hundred nobles and gentlemen in the most sumptuous vestments, as well as the four princes of the blood royal. Henry, with an expression of the liveliest satisfaction, and proceeding at the slowest pace, courteously saluted the ladies by his gestures and the waving of his royal hand, being at intervals stopped by the crowds that blocked up the passage; so that this triumphal march of the adored father of his people was so procrastinated that it was night when his majesty gained the Louvre. Henry, who was touched to the soul at the reception he had witnessed, was frequently moved to tears, and in the joy of his heart exclaimed: "*It is now I am recompensed for all my labours, the pangs I have experienced, and the unwearied care I have taken, since I am requited by the prayers of a people possessing so much gratitude.*"

CHAPTER XIX.

Henry the patron of literature.—His own acquirements as a writer.—His friendship and munificence to poets and men of letters.—Treaty with the sultan Achmet.—Grateful testimonies of men of genius for Henry's patronage.—Differences between the catholics and protestants.—Narrow escape of the king and queen on passing the Seine.—Intrigues of the ladies at court.—Henry mediates between pope Paul the Fifth and the Venetian States.—He also proves the pacificator of Spain and the Low Countries.—Letter forwarded to the king by the States-general.—Henry's domestic disquietudes, and insolence of the queen's favourites.—The king's passion for mademoiselle de Montmorenci.—Henry and Bassompierre.—His quarrel and reconciliation with Sully.—Arrival of Don Pedro the Spanish ambassador.—The king's paternal fondness for his children.—His liberality to his subjects afflicted by an overflowing of the Loire.—He visits, incognito, the habitations of the peasantry.—Henry's plan for a general peace in Europe under the title of The Christian Republic.—Marriages of the duke de Vendome and Frances of Lorraine, and the prince of Condé and mademoiselle de Montmorenci.—Flight of the prince of Condé.—The king's anger, and Sully's advice.—Armament for the war against Spain.—Henry's letter to the archduke.—Preparations for the coronation of Mary de Medicis in opposition to the king's wishes.—His melancholy presentiments.—Alleged prodigies and prognostics.—The queen's coronation.—Henry's uneasiness and agony of mind.—Ravillac murders the king.—Prosperous state in which Henry left

France.—Excess of popular anguish, and Henry justly entitled to the epithets of the Good and the Great!

We are now arrived at that period when the unremitting assiduity of Henry and his ministers had placed the kingdom of France in the most enviable and prosperous situation. Peace was established beyond her frontiers; internal tranquillity insured happiness to the labouring classes of society; it appeared as if an increase of felicity was impossible, and that the only being throughout the realm who anticipated an augmentation of these blessings was the monarch himself.

All good and virtuous kings are anxious to protect men of science and learning; and Henry having been better educated than any other nobleman of his court, was fond of reading, in which he had uniformly indulged notwithstanding the pressure of public affairs. The constant study of Henry, and that which is perhaps of most utility for a prince, were the writings of Plutarch, which he was in the habit of quoting at pleasure. He was partial to the conversation of the learned, particularly those who possessed an agreeable and lively temperament of mind. He had always a chosen few of this description with whom he indulged himself in familiar converse during his repasts, varying his subjects from serious to the agreeable, and issuing particular orders that every thing said in public respecting himself, might be faithfully detailed. Being endowed with such a character, it is not sur-

prising that this prince should have stood forth the patron of the most enlightened writers of that period, whether Frenchmen or foreigners. He gave to his successors this praiseworthy example, which subsequently conferred so much lustre on the annals of Louis the Fourteenth; it was Henry who paved the way for that brilliant career which accords the wreath of fame to the sage, the artist, and the prince by whom they are protected, since, in affording them scope for the exertion of their useful talents, he is no less worthy the glory to which they are entitled.

During his youth Henry had augmented the library of his predecessors at Vendome; the poet Ronsard, at that period so celebrated, received for a sonnet which he had composed in honour of the prince, a considerable portion of the forest of Vendome, which, together with the city so called, constituted part of the patrimony of the Bourbons, being also the native country of that poet.

It is a singular circumstance, and well worthy being recorded, that in another copy of verses addressed by Ronsard to Henry, while the three princes of the house of Valois were still living, he predicted that Henry would inherit the French throne; the lines alluded to being as follow:

Mon prince, illustre sang de la race Bourbonne,
A qui le ciel promet de porter la couronne
Que ton grand Saint Louis porta dessus le front, &c.

THUS ANGLICISED:

My prince of Bourbon blood, and high renown,
Whom Heaven designs to wear the Gallic crown,
Which great Saint Louis on his temples bore, &c.

Henry's love for literature appears to have been hereditary in his family on the maternal side. His grandmother, Margaret of Valois, sister of Francis the First, was the earliest French female writer who acquired any sterling reputation as an author; Jeanne d'Albret, his mother, greatly distinguished herself in literature; and his sister the duchess of Bar evinced the same talents, having produced several poetic productions, which are handed down to posterity.

A few days subsequent to the king's triumphal entry into Paris, Passerat, one of the most enlightened men of that age, opened public schools by the prince's order, and the professors were all recalled and admitted to an audience with the monarch, who received them with that affability which enhanced the value of those benefits he chose to bestow; at the same time making known that it was his pleasure their salaries should be doubled: "*I would rather*," said the prince, "*that the expenditures for my table were curtailed, in order that men of letters, and those who read to me, may be amply remunerated.*" The king presented the jesuits with his mansion of La Fleche, in which the nuptials of his father the king of Navarre had been solemnized, in order that the edifice might serve that fraternity for a college. He paid the pensions for a number of young gentlemen who were tutored in all kinds of exercises, and deigned to occupy himself personally in looking after the minutiæ of that establishment. In the sequel, the jesuits

obtained a donation of one hundred thousand crowns from the king, that they might extend the mansion and augment the number of students; and by the same liberal benefactor several other colleges were also endowed.

Henry wrote with his own hand to the celebrated Casaubon, to engage that literary character to establish himself in France with his family; he was also desirous of fixing young Grotius at Paris, whose dawning reputation began to expand over the Low Countries, and who in the course of his writings takes pride to himself *for having touched the victorious and generous hand of the hero of France.* Among other literary characters who were benefited by this prince, may be enumerated Cayet, Le Febvre, Justus Lipsius (who, with Scaliger and Casaubon, constituted what was termed the triumvirate of literature); Fenouillet, one of the greatest orators of that period, whom Henry raised to the bishopric of Montpellier; the eloquent Francis de Sales, whose morals and irreproachable life he admired equally with his pious and touching productions; Coeffeteau, who in the austerity of the cloister conferred such signal benefits on literature; cardinals d'Ossat and du Perron; Bertaut, bishop of Seez, known for his pleasing vein of poetry, who in one of his discourses states, that *Henry never gained the knowledge of any praiseworthy individual, out of his kingdom, and in particular to be admired on the score of letters, but that he favoured him by granting some pension.* Perefixe adds, *that he also settled sums*

upon several learned men in Italy, Germany, and Holland, and that he took care such allowances should be punctually liquidated. He was no less munificent to Pasquier, Saint Marthe, and De Thou, so justly renowned for his many rare qualifications as a laborious and authentic narrator of facts. Henry selected for his historian Peter Mathieu, although that writer had previously figured as a most furious leaguer; at which period he produced a tragedy entitled the *Guisiade*, wherein he had insulted the king of Navarre in the grossest manner. Henry, however, forgot his couplets and the injuries heaped upon himself, and he had no cause to repent; for from that period Mathieu was entirely devoted to his service. The prince being one day occupied in hearing the perusal of a portion of his own history as recorded by the writer in question, wherein he spoke of Henry's predilection for the fair sex; the latter stopped Mathieu in order to inquire what necessity there was to make known his weaknesses; upon which the historian represented that it was his bounden duty, as a recorder of historical facts, not to omit any thing; upon which, after a few moments' reflection, the prince replied, "*True, it is requisite you should speak the whole truth; for were you to remain silent as to my faults, no one would credit the rest. Be it so, then; let them stand upon record, and above all that my son may learn how to avoid them.*" The prince was no less the patron of poets, having conferred his favours on Regnier and Desportes, while his

knowledge of Malherbe, whose verses tended so much to establish the French language on a permanent basis, was acquired in the following manner.

During the journey to Lyons undertaken by the king in 1601, conversing one day with cardinal Perron on the subject of poetry, he inquired of that ecclesiastic whether he still accustomed himself to make verses; to which the cardinal replied, that since his majesty had honoured him with an employment of a public nature, he had abandoned the Muses; independent of which it was high time he should give up poetry, since a Norman gentleman established in Provence of the name of Malherbe, had carried French versification to such a pitch, that it was impossible any person could approach him. The king in consequence treasured up the name of Malherbe, and frequently spoke concerning that writer to Mr. Desyvetaux, who was then tutor of the duke de Vendome. In 1605 Malherbe being called to Paris on his own private affairs, the preceptor of the prince seized that favourable opportunity to make the circumstance known to Henry, who accordingly invited him to court. The king being at that period on the eve of setting out for Limousin, ordered the poet to write some verses on the subject, which Malherbe presented on the monarch's return, who was so charmed with the production that he commanded Bellegarde, his grand equerry, to provide for him until he should have a regular pension awarded; shortly after

which, Malherbe enjoyed the title of gentleman in ordinary of the king's chamber.

Notwithstanding Henry's passionate love for literature, he knew how to repress every species of licentiousness and impiety, at the same time granting all freedom of opinion that was consonant with decorum. Every attack of a personal nature was interdicted; but unlimited licence accorded in censuring those acts which were in any way opposed to religion, morality, or justice. Henry, the most philanthropic monarch that ever wielded a sceptre, detested tyrannical measures, being, in reality, the most sincere advocate for rational liberty; and we are told by writers of the period, that he was frequently in the habit of repeating this most admirable maxim. *The first law of a monarch is to observe the whole code; and he has himself two sovereigns, God and the law.*

Charles, surnamed the Wise, was the founder of the Royal Library at Paris; and his having collected together nine hundred volumes, was at that period looked upon as a prodigy. Francis the First augmented that literary store with all the Greek manuscripts he could procure, which he even despatched emissaries to the East to purchase. During the civil wars the library was pillaged and dispersed, by the ignorant and fanatical members of the League, who appropriated to their own use those precious spoils. Henry the Fourth, who was destined to put a stop to such plunderings, and repair every public

ill, gathered up the scattered remains of that literary store, adding thereto his library of Vendome, and commanding the purchase of new books. Catherine de Medicis had left a very rich library in Italy, particularly abounding in Greek manuscripts, being the residue of the famous Medici collection: this, Henry also paid for, and united to the Royal Library: added to which, purchases were made in the empire of Morocco; the learned Stephen Hubert, professor of the Greek language, and subsequently the king's physician, being deputed upon that honourable mission, with the title of agent.—The same person was afterwards despatched to Spain, to collect the best writings on medicine and morality, together with works of imagination composed by the Arabians. These various acquisitions comprise a large portion of the most precious relics now preserved in the Royal Library at Paris; and it must consequently be allowed, that the learned of the present day are not a little indebted to the liberality of Henry the Great, in a literary point of view.

In the year 1604, Henry had ratified a treaty with the Sultan Achmet, which was very advantageous, and truly glorious for France. It was therein stipulated, that all the nations of Europe, not excepting the English, might carry on a free commercial intercourse in all the ports of the Levant, under the flag and protection of France. From hence it is obvious, that this magnanimous prince took advantage of the as-

cendency he had acquired over the emperor of the Turks, to ensure the commercial prosperity of every European nation, whether at peace or war. His great soul uniformly despised personal interest, from the moment it was calculated to disunite and prove prejudicial to the general good; he contemplated in such conduct, nothing but hatred and vengeance, the inevitable results of an odious policy. He was of opinion that all should unite and arm against a force that strives to oppress; because the true use of power is to support and protect. He was never ambitious of any other titles than those of—father, friend, conciliator, arbitrator, and protector; which he merited, and very justly obtained.

President Hénaut, in his *Abrégé Chron.* says, "Henry's treaty of commerce with the Sultan Achmet, is particularly remarkable, as having been published at Paris in the Turkish and French languages, at the printing press of the Arabian, Persian, and Turkish dialects, &c. a circumstance which demonstrates that the Arabian and oriental characters were in use at Paris previous to the publication of the famous Polyglot Bible of Le Jay."

At no other period did the French court abound with so many courtiers and illustrious warriors, who cultivated the *Belles Lettres.* Grammont and Bellegarde were as distinguished for their acquirements, as brilliant on account of their wit. It was at this period Lanoue was engaged

in composing his *Political Discourses;* and D'Aubigné his *History* and *Epigrams*, in verse. The first marshal Biron, the duke de Nevers, Villeroy, the duke de Bouillon, Lesdiguières, Brissac, Brantome, Crillon, Bassompierre; the Agennes, a family consisting of eight brothers, not one of whom had been a leaguer, and preserving their fidelity inviolable to the king; Salignac, baron de la Mothe Fenelon, who being ambassador to queen Elizabeth, refused to offer an excuse for the massacre of Saint Bartholomew; and the duke de Sully, who, independent of his Memoirs, has left a parallel between Cæsar and Henry the Fourth; such are the men who, for the most part, supported the dignity of the throne by their swords, and occupied their leisure hours in promulgating instruction, and disseminating useful knowledge. Even the dissolute queen Margaret exerted her talents as a writer; and Henry himself, though burthened with the weight of public affairs, found leisure to cultivate letters, of which he used to style himself the *second restorer*. We have already observed, that he translated *Cæsar's Commentaries;* independent of which he composed verses, and many charming songs, handed down as being the effusions of his fancy. Henry was allowed to rank as one of the most classical writers of his time; his speeches are admirable, and the major part of his letters deserve to be carefully collected. They merely stand in need of a more chaste style, to rank as models of epistolary excellence.

On a careful perusal it will be uniformly found, that never was candour and liberality expressed with more grace and delicacy, or love and friendship delineated in a more touching and natural strain. It is hardly to be conceived how a prince, whose life was so uniformly active and occupied, could have written with his own hand such a multiplicity of letters; yet the duke de Sully avers, that he alone possessed no less than four thousand.

The following characteristic anecdotes, in reference to the facetious conduct adopted by men of letters and others towards the king, will tend to elucidate, in a forcible manner, the liberal sentiments entertained by the prince, and his extreme affability in regard to poets, warriors, &c.

Upon one occasion, a poet, who was perfectly conversant with the eminent qualifications and generosity of the king's heart towards the indigent, complained that too great an impost was levied upon him; and in furtherance of this statement wrote impromptu the following lines, which procured him a liberal recompense from the prince.

This poet's purse good specie lacks;
So may it, sire, your pleasure be,
In lieu of asking for the tax,
To place him in some charity.

Henry the Fourth displayed similar generosity in the bosom of his household. D'Aubigné, one

of the gentlemen of his chamber, and who, according to his own statement, had been brought up as it were under the eyes of the prince, sometimes complained to his master that he was not sufficiently recompensed. Ingratitude, certainly, constituted no feature in Henry's character; however, he was frequently obliged to conciliate the dissatisfied catholic noblemen by depriving his old and tried friends of the rewards that were so justly their due. The prince, chancing one day to meet D'Aubigné at the fair of St. Germain, said, "that he was desirous of giving him a fairing;" for which purpose he entered the shop of a painter, and, seeing his own portrait for sale, desired him to accept it. D'Aubigné, who was dissatisfied, determined not to receive the present, and therefore, instead of taking it away, wrote at the bottom of it the following four lines:

So strange the acts our king displays,
I marvel what sprite ranks his friend;
Since with a painting he repays
Those who in coin have served his end.

The king, on returning to the shop of the artist, in order to pay for the picture, was informed that D'Aubigné did not choose to take it; but had written some lines under it, which the prince having perused, laughed heartily.

The same gentleman happening to sleep upon some occasion in the king's wardrobe, remarked to La Force, who was his bed-fellow, "Our

master is the most ungrateful mortal living:" upon which La Force, who was partly asleep, demanded what he had said. "*How deaf you are,*" said Henry, whom D'Aubigné had thought fast asleep: "*he says that I am the most ungrateful of men.*" "Go to sleep, sire," said D'Aubigné, "we have much more to say about you." "The following day," says D'Aubigné, in his History, "the king was not out of temper, but at the same time he did not give me one farthing the more."

The president Fauchet, of whom a work is extant relative to the antiquities of France, had a very venerable physiognomy, and a long full beard. Henry being at St. Germaine-en-Laye, sent for him, and upon his arrival the prince particularly pointed him out to a person who was beside him, observing, "*There is precisely what you want.*" The individual in question, who was an artist, in consequence modelled the face of Fauchet, which was intended to form the physiognomy of a river god, which he was about to execute. The president, who had not imagined that it was for such a purpose his master had required his presence, wrote the following couplets; which being presented afterwards to Henry the Fourth, procured him the employ of historiographer of France, with a salary of six hundred crowns.

I received at Saint Germaine,
From my sovereign, frank and free,
As reward for toil and pain,
Carved in bronze, my effigy.

Could he from hunger just as well
This visage lank of mine secure,
I'd joyful of my journey tell,
And visit oft his friendly door.

Come, Sallust, Tacitus—oh! speed,
With him who, Padua, honour'd thee;
In some dark hole bewail your need,
And make wry faces, friends, with me.

Crillon had received from Henry the Third the surname of *The Brave;* whereas Henry the Fourth called him *Bravest of the Brave.* That illustrious warrior being one day in the king's closet, who was engaged with several nobles and foreign ministers, the conversation chanced to turn on the praise of valiant captains. "*Gentlemen,*" said the king, placing his hand on the shoulder of Crillon, "*this is the first soldier in the world.*" "Sire," answered Crillon, with that energy habitual to him, "you tell a *lie;* it is yourself who rank the first; I am only the second."

This singular mode of expression was more gratifying to the monarch than the most studied eulogies. Crillon combined with bravery and candour the greatest disinterestedness. He saw, without murmuring, the most rebellious subjects enjoying those honours and dignities that were justly his due. His zeal for his master was never compromised; and it was on that account Henry, in order to justify himself for not having done all that was due to his merit, would frequently say, "*I could count upon the brave Crillon; whereas I had to purchase all those who were my persecutors.*"

The monarch who stands forth in support of literature is no less friendly to the arts; and we find that Henry invited from Italy and Flanders the most celebrated painters, sculptors, architects, and musicians of every description; he was particularly fond of the latter science, and composed several airs and *Sarabands* or Spanish dances, which are still preserved in France.

The Muses, at all times grateful to their benefactors, were not unmindful of the obligations due to this munificent monarch, who was singularly indebted for the good offices bestowed upon him by the votaries of literature. The overthrow of the League, as we have before remarked, was in a great measure due to the sarcastic talents of the authors of *La Satire Menippée*, together with the writings of the bold and virtuous Du Belloy, &c. His victories and his clemency were eulogized by the poet; painting and sculpture have retraced all his noble actions, and multiplied his portraits; music, through the medium of songs that have become popular, has eternized throughout the nation the remembrance of his bravery and munificence; architecture has engrafted his cyphers on the structures he caused to be raised; the sciences, all of which he encouraged, offered him the same homage; the learned, who visited foreign climes by his direction, bore witness of his renown, and all testified their gratitude in their productions; the numismatic art produced a prodigious quantity of beautiful medals in honour of his great exploits; and botany, of

which he founded the first course of lectures, and the earliest public garden, has denominated one plant by the name of *The Good Henry*. In a word, the scientific, the learned, and the artist, acquitted themselves towards him; yet this brilliant glory, notwithstanding all its splendour, would have been but imperfect, had not the devout in the temples he raised, the orphan and the poor in the hospitals he founded, the students in the colleges which he endowed; the traveller proceeding along the shaded roads traced by his orders; the mariner under his protecting flag; the artisan in the manufactories he established; and the peasant before his humble hearth, united their voices in one general hymn of praise, showering blessings on him who justly ranked the friend, the father, and the universal benefactor.

We cannot better terminate this general eulogy of Henry's character than by subjoining the following quaint description from a scarce English tract, printed at the time, wherein the writer thus describes the prince: "And lastly, to sum up this man of men, this *prince-like souldier, and souldier-like prince*, whose royall face is white with *time*, with *watchings*, and with *experience*, while the laurels which begirt his venerable head, and tooke their roote in his *caske*, have been gathered in the grounds of *three pitched* fields, of thirty-five *encounters* of *armies*, of an hundred and forty combats, and three hundred sieges of places; in all which his *person* strived (if it were possible) to

have got the start of his *courage*. For these *causes* hath the Christian world reason to rejoice in the contemplation of so able a champion against the common enemie; and the French nation to hold themselves happy in having so excellent a prince."

Nothing very material transpired during the rest of this year, except some differences fomented between the catholics and Calvinists, which were, however, speedily appeased, owing to the firm conduct pursued by the king. Upon this occasion Henry ordered a gallows to be erected at Saint Anthony's gate, where the tumult had originated, in order that the first might be hung up who should trouble the public tranquillity, let his religion be what it might. A very warm dispute occurred between the lieutenants of the civil and criminal departments, respecting which of the two had the right to raise the machine in question; when a witty saying of the knight Du Guet terminated the difference in question; his remark was that two gibbets ought to be raised, and *that each might possess his own*.

It was about this period the king, the queen, the prince of Conti, and the dukes of Montpensier and Vendome, on their return to Paris from Saint Germain, were nearly drowned in passing the Seine. At that time there existed no bridge at Neuilly, and consequently the river could only be traversed by means of a ferry; and in this instance, as the carriage was entering the boat, one of the horses, taking fright, sprang

into the water, and dragged the carriage after it in a very deep part of the river. The gentlemen in the royal suite dismounted from their horses, and, booted as they were, plunged into the stream, when the queen was rescued from her perilous predicament by a courtier named Chataigneraie, who seized her majesty by the hair of the head, for which he was subsequently rewarded with a casket of precious stones, a pension, and the command of a company of the royal guard. Other gentlemen surrounded, and brought the king in safety to shore; but as Henry was an expert swimmer, he again threw himself into the river in order to rescue the duke de Vendome, which he effected, and fortunately no lives were lost. It is a singular fact, that the prince, owing to this accident, was relieved from a racking tooth-ache, which had seized him the preceding evening; and he, in consequence, laughingly remarked, "that a sound ducking was the best receipt for that pain he had ever heard of; and that, having eaten too much salt food at dinner, it was requisite he should drink copiously afterwards."

The marchioness de Verneuil, when made acquainted with the narrow escape her majesty had experienced, being always fond of indulging her sarcastic wit, said to the king the first time she saw him after the accident, "that in case she had been one of the party, after having been satisfied that his majesty was out of danger, she should have cried out, *The queen drinks.*" As

spies and flatterers are never wanting in courts, this raillery was detailed to Mary de Medicis, who was in consequence so enraged, that she continued a fortnight without exchanging a word with the king; and it was only through the means of an operatic representation that peace was effected. Soon after they were reconciled, the king was desirous that a grand ballet should be got up, in which it was intended that the queen should perform; but Henry having intimated a wish that the countess of Moret should also officiate, her majesty objected from motives of jealousy, and the entertainment was given up. Soon after this misunderstanding, the king, having ascertained that the countess favoured the addresses of the prince de Joinville, resolved to seek consolation for the infidelity of that lady, in the society of the duchess of Montpensier, who had very recently become a widow. Having determined on this step, as the duchess was then absent from Paris, Henry deputed the count de Cramail, whose mansion was near that of the duchess, to make the necessary overtures. The count, who had an agreeable exterior, and was neither deficient in wit nor courage, joyfully undertook the commission, hoping to profit himself by the occasion, in case the princess yielded to his majesty's wishes. At the first interview, however, he ascertained that the duchess could not be prevailed upon to conduct herself in a manner that would be prejudicial to her honour, and therefore con-

tented himself with endeavouring to prevail upon her to visit the court, in order to afford Henry the satisfaction of beholding her at least, as nothing further was to be expected. In this, however, the count equally failed, and was compelled to abandon the affair altogether.

Madame de Verneuil, who continued to live with the king sometimes on amicable terms, and at others in a state of open warfare, took advantage of Henry's ill success with his other mistresses, and thus triumphed over all her rivals, notwithstanding the faithless countess of Moret had been brought to bed of a son, who was subsequently Anthony de Bourbon, count de Moret, killed during the succeeding reign at the battle of Castlenaudari. The marchioness de Verneuil conceiving that the king would be more enamoured of her in case she excited his jealousy, spread a report that the duke of Guise had promised her marriage; and even went so far as to publish the banns unknown to that nobleman, who was passionately fond of her sister mademoiselle d'Entragues. The duke, however, was not the favoured lover, as Bassompierre had gained the lady's affections, with whom he was generally in the habit of passing his nights.

Such were the love intrigues of Henry's court at the termination of the year; and at the beginning of 1607 the first political event of notoriety was a termination of all the differences that had arisen between pope Paul the Fifth and the States of Venice; upon which occasion

Henry was chosen mediator. Throughout this business the king conducted himself with so much wisdom and impartiality, that the States General of the United Provinces subsequently solicited he would also interfere for the purpose of bringing about a peace between that country and Spain.

Henry's frank policy was well known to all the European courts; it was universally understood that his ultimate ambition tended only to preserve throughout Europe a tranquillity similar to that enjoyed by his own subjects. His wise and able ministers despatched to the various foreign powers, successfully aided the uprightness and purity of his intentions; nor were they ignorant that their master, in case of necessity, was fully enabled to support the claims of justice and humanity, with all the energy those powerful interests are capable of inspiring. The ascendency he had obtained throughout Europe, far from being a usurpation or a burthensome yoke, was a happy concession made by universal esteem; and every event of that period proved the utility of a preponderance that was the result of virtue. Every potentate cheerfully submitted to the advice of Henry the Fourth: he felt that in acting thus, he yielded to the sound dictates of reason; that to demand his arbitration was the certain pledge of good faith; and Spain, in consequence, accepted Henry's mediation.—This reconciliation between the Low Countries and the archduke Albert of Austria, and Clara

Eugenia, daughter of Philip the Second, whom that prince, during his ambitious speculations, had endeavoured to place upon the throne of France, and to whom he had awarded the Low Countries on espousing her to the archduke of Austria, was an affair attended with great difficulties. It was requisite to oppose gentleness and patience to the wily policy pursued by Spain, as well as to repress and ameliorate the well-founded animosity entertained by the Dutch. Spain, in reality, even when consenting to the peace, sought to subject the United Provinces; while the latter power was fully resolved on preserving her liberty from every infraction. The continuation of hostile measures, however, had reduced Spain and the archduke and his duchess to a state of exhaustion, of which the United Provinces could not take advantage, as by the annihilation of their commerce they found themselves in a similar predicament.

The two powers began by signing a suspension of arms for eight months, and then entered upon the negotiation. Father Neyen, a cordelier, and provincial of his fraternity, a man of very distinguished merit, made the first proposals for peace in the names of the archduke and his duchess. It is a circumstance worthy of remark, that the negotiations carried on for two treaties, the most important of that period, were set on foot by two brothers of the same religious order; namely, the treaty of Vervins, by father Catalagirone, and that now under review by father Neyen.

Henry despatched Jeanin to assist at the negotiations, which lasted for a considerable period. That minister, according to his master's instructions, displayed, during the whole progress of this affair, as much moderation as prudence. The treaty, however, was not signed until the year 1609.

The archduke and the king of Spain recognized for states, provinces and free countries over which they made no pretensions, the illustrious lords of the States General of the United Provinces of the Low Countries. They concluded with them a treaty for twelve years both by sea and land; each retained the territory he then possessed; and the towns, villages, and hamlets, were united to those cities over which they claimed sovereignty.

In this manner was the Dutch republic established; the glory of having ensured the freedom of that nation, whose morals, courage, and industry, have rendered it so truly worthy the esteem of all other countries, was due to Henry the Fourth. In consequence of this blessing, the republic testified its gratitude to the monarch in a letter, which it is essentially necessary here to insert, as it records one of the most enviable titles of the glory of Henry the Great.

Letter from the States General to the King, dated 22d of June, 1609.

"SIRE—As president Jeanin, your majesty's ambassador, is on the point of leaving this coun-

try, on his return to France, we have conceived it our bounden duty most humbly to thank your majesty for having in your royal pleasure despatched hither a personage who leaves us such signal proofs of his great experience, judgment, prudence, and upright conduct in momentous affairs; and who, by his magnanimity and singular skill, has surmounted every opposing difficulty: insomuch that all honest men, satisfied with him and his actions, at the same time most heartily praise and render thanks to your majesty more especially for this benefit; as also for the letters of the 17th of May, and for the league and guarantee of the truce concluded between your majesty, the king of Great Britain, and ourselves conjointly. The president returns so perfectly well acquainted with the actual constitution of our state, that he will merely be the bearer of his own report; but we beg leave to assure your majesty, that, after the Almighty, we are indebted for the preservation of the same to his intervention; and that ourselves and our posterity must ever confess the obligation, and gratefully acknowledge the services received; having nothing to do but follow his sage counsels and advice, holding the same for a rule in conducting and directing our affairs. We have the firmest confidence in the continuance of your majesty's paternal affections, succour, and assistance, as we most humbly solicit the same as well as the Creator, sire, that he may preserve

the royal person of your majesty in the most perfect health and long life. From the Hague, this 22d day of June, 1609. From your majesty's most humble servants, the States General of the United Low Countries.

"By order of the same,

"AERCENS."

Although these two mediations engrossed much of Henry's time during the years 1607 and 1608, they did not prevent him from attending to other affairs. War, policy, finance, justice, police, fortifications, artillery, marine, buildings, manufactures, commerce, sciences, arts, and literature, by turns employed his time, and occupied the administration: he directed a masterly glance at each department of the state, and ordered every thing with coolness and without the least confusion. From the autograph letters of Henry, in the possession of count de Canteleu, it appears that his zeal for religion prompted him to regulate affairs with the greatest rigour, in order to maintain among the clergy the purest morality; neither was there during his reign a single bishop whose conduct merited reproach. In one instance, only, the king had cause to be dissatisfied, and that was with the bishop of Rhodez, whose imperious character rendered him hateful throughout his diocese. Henry, therefore, out of respect for the episcopal dignity, did not think fit to revoke that ecclesiastic, but removed him from Rhodez to another bishopric, with an injunction that he was to behave with more

evangelical gentleness; at the same time intimating, that in case he did not inspire the love of his flock, he should be stripped of his robes: "For," observed Henry, "every pastor who is unable to gain the hearts of those committed to his guidance, does not know how to conduct his flock."

Sully says, that during this year, as well as those preceding, the domestic affairs of Henry were, as usual, embittered by the ceaseless jealousies and bickerings of the queen, and the encreasing insolence of her Italian favourites Conchini and Eleanor Galigay. Those artful individuals used every expedient to augment the ill-humour of their mistress; over whom they had acquired such an ascendency, that she was actuated in her love and hatred according as they directed. Henry had frequently been advised to send away those mischievous enemies to his repose, who were like firebrands in his palace; for it is even said that Galigay, fearful that the queen would love her less in case she cherished that affection for the king which a wife generally entertains towards her husband, used every effort to disunite their majesties as much as possible, in order to engross her mistress's undivided affections. It was generally supposed that Galigay, and her husband Conchini, acted in conjunction, during the life of his majesty, to sour the mind of the queen, and produce her ill-humours. In consequence, for the space of seven or eight years, if one day's calm existed between them, it was followed by two of discontent and

quarrelling. Don John de Medicis having been deputed by Henry to exhort the queen to dismiss them, the princess flew into the most ungovernable rage, reproaching him in bitter terms; and carried her resentment so far, that, notwithstanding all the king's efforts to appease her, Don John was compelled to quit the kingdom. These favourites also proceeded to such lengths as to use threats against his majesty's person if he dared attempt any thing hostile to their interests, which he was frequently urged to do by his ministers, and those courtiers who were on intimate terms with their master.

Henry, however, opposing the dictates of his generous heart, and aided by the advice of his wisest counsellors, for some time re-established order in his household. By his firmness he moderated the pride and petulance of the marchioness de Verneuil, threatening to discard her altogether if she did not pursue a line of conduct more discreet and prudent. By means of money he also disencumbered himself of the countess of Moret and mademoiselle des Essarts; and the queen happily encreasing in a state of pregnancy, the prince conducted himself with great tenderness towards her; and, on her giving birth to a third prince on the 25th of April, testified so much satisfaction on the occasion, that he only dreamed of enjoying that state of tranquillity which was thus procured by his prudence, and not without a considerable share of difficulty.

It was about this period that Henrietta Charlotte, daughter of the constable de Montmorenci and Louisa de Budos, appeared at court, whose dazzling beauty totally eclipsed the charms of every other female. All eyes were in consequence fixed upon this bright star, who soon had in her train as many admirers as there were gallants among the nobility. Bassompierre had the felicity of triumphing; and nothing was wanting to complete the bliss of those lovers but the royal assent to their union. In consequence of this, Bassompierre addressed himself to the monarch, soliciting permission to espouse mademoiselle de Montmorenci, and to treat with the duke de Bouillon for the post of first gentleman of the chamber. With both these requests his majesty not only acquiesced, but was also desirous that the constable, who was then in disgrace, should return to court. On the following day Henry paid a visit to the duchess d'Angouleme, at whose mansion mademoiselle de Montmorenci was then lodging: he had already seen her at a ball, in the costume of Diana holding an arrow in her hand; and it was upon that occasion he had experienced the first inroads of a passion which subsequently acquired so much mastery over him. The confidants of the prince's pleasures, and the relatives of the house of Montmorenci, imagining that this enchanting woman would banish all competitors from Henry's mind, sought to encrease his passion; so that

he was flattered in every direction except that from whence he could alone find relief. However, as the king felt inclined to undertake every thing, he conceived that it was not too much to indulge his hopes.

The marriage of Bassompierre and mademoiselle de Montmorenci continued, notwithstanding, decided upon; but as it was only to be ratified under the sanction of the duke de Bouillon, the latter was not satisfied, and resolved to break it off. Henry having one day seen mademoiselle de Montmorenci in the queen's apartment, and chancing to speak in praise of her beauty to the duke de Bouillon, that nobleman drew the king aside, and expressed surprise that his majesty should have consented to the marriage of that princess with Bassompierre; as his nephew, the prince of Condé, would be a more appropriate match for the lady in question. Henry made no reply, but felt the full force of this remark; and having on the ensuing day again beheld the princess, whom he found more enchanting than ever, the monarch came to the resolution of ensuring to himself so desirable a conquest, be the sacrifice what it might. In order to succeed in his enterprise, the king judged it necessary that the lady should, in the first instance, be united to a man she did not love; and it consequently became necessary to ascertain the state of her heart as regarded Bassompierre.

Henry was soon enlightened upon that head, for being then seized by a fit of the gout, he was visited by madame d'Angouleme and her niece mademoiselle de Montmorenci, when Grammont, who was present, perceiving that his majesty was desirous of conversing with the last-mentioned lady, purposely engaged the attention of her aunt. The king, taking advantage of the opportunity, informed the princess that he was desirous of loving her as his daughter; that he intended she should take up her residence at the Louvre while Bassompierre continued on service, and then requested she would frankly avow whether the proposal met her approbation, and that, if such was not the case, he would break off the marriage and give her to his nephew the prince of Condé. The princess, who by no means understood the real drift of the king, naturally replied, that as it was the wish of her father, she conceived she should be happy with Bassompierre. Henry assumed an air of satisfaction; but was from that hour determined the lady should espouse another husband. On the following day he summoned Bassompierre, to whom he testified many marks of kindness; and then stated that he had been thinking about marrying him. The former, totally ignorant of his master's intentions, replied, "that the constable having been seized with the gout, was the only cause of his nuptials being procrastinated." "That is not what I mean," said the king; "I

wish you to espouse mademoiselle d'Aumale, and by that means revive the duchy in her behalf." "What! sire," answered Bassompierre, confounded, "does your majesty mean to give me two wives?" "It is necessary," said Henry, "to deal frankly with you, my friend; I myself love the princess; should you marry her, and obtain her heart, I should detest you; and in case she loved me, I should equally be hated by you. Do not, therefore, let us forfeit the mutual amity we feel for each other; I love you, and should feel the greatest repugnance in withdrawing my friendship. I wish to ally the princess to the prince of Condé, who, although young, is more fond of the chase than the ladies; and as you well know he is poor, and indebted to my power for every thing, my intention is to enrich him by a donation of one hundred thousand livres a-year for his private pleasures, provided he requires nothing but an innocent affection from her whom I destine to become his wife." Bassompierre, being well convinced that all opposition would be fruitless, made a virtue of necessity, by yielding up the treasure which it was not in his power to preserve. The king wept for joy on witnessing the submission of Bassompierre, loaded him with caresses, and then returned to the subject of his union with mademoiselle d'Aumale; but as the heart of the unfortunate lover was solely occupied with the loss of her he ardently adored, and felt wholly

incapable of contracting any new engagement, he supplicated that his majesty would leave him at liberty on that head. Such was the conduct of Henry, which admits of no palliation: such the weakness of a hero, when yielding to the fascinations of beauty, and abandoning every sentiment of justice to the wild caprices of ungovernable love.

This is not, however, the only instance of Henry's forgetting what was due to justice and friendship; as it appears from the Memoirs of Sully that he had often misunderstandings with that tried and able statesman, of which the following will serve as a proof, and at the same time display the prince's goodness of heart. The king upon one occasion being at the arsenal was so dissatisfied with Sully that he quitted his presence in the most unceremonious manner, exclaiming, "This man is insupportable; he does nothing but contradict me, and blame every thing I strive to accomplish; but by G—— I will be obeyed, nor will I see him for a fortnight to come."

Sully's secretaries and his attendants who had overheard these words, conceived that their master was in complete disgrace; the whole establishment in consequence took the alarm, and Sully was himself greatly affected. Notwithstanding this, he passed the residue of the day and the whole of the following night writing in the study for his discontented master, in whose

behalf he voluntarily laboured to the exclusion of his natural rest, and for whom, if requisite, he would have forfeited his existence.

The ensuing morning before seven o'clock Henry arrived at the arsenal accompanied by five persons, when the monarch instantly proceeded to the chamber of the minister, without permitting any one to advertise Sully of his arrival. Henry knocked at the door of the study, upon which the latter having inquired, *Who is there?* immediately heard the voice of his master, who answered, "*It is the king.*" Sully instantly arose, oppressed by the conflicting emotions of pain and joy; and having admitted the king, the latter demanded how he had been engaged? upon which Sully informed his majesty that he was occupied the whole of the night on his affairs; Henry then, turning to those courtiers who had followed him, said to one in particular, "Well, Roquelaure, for how much would you spend such a life as this?"—"Not for all your majesty's treasures," was the reply. Henry, completely overcome by tenderness, immediately dismissed his followers from the apartment, and then acquainted Sully that he was come to consult him on a matter of importance that gave him particular uneasiness. The minister, who was desirous of calling to the king's recollection the scene of the foregoing evening, gravely replied, that he could not venture to give his advice. "So, so," said Henry, smiling,

" you choose to put on the cold and the reserved! you are still angry about the business of yesterday! As for me, it is all gone by. Come, come, we must have no more of this; embrace me, and let us live together upon the same free terms we were wont to do. I know you well; if you conducted yourself otherwise, it would be a convincing proof that you no longer troubled yourself concerning me or my affairs. Although I am sometimes angry, it is my wish that you should endure it; for I do not love you a jot the less; on the contrary, the very moment you should cease to contradict me in matters which I know to be adverse to your sentiments, I should think that you no longer felt affection for me."

After this explanation the king and Sully were in a few moments reconciled, when they continued in close conversation for two hours; and on quitting the minister, Henry, joining the courtiers who were in attendance, thus addressed them: " There are some people stupid enough to believe that when I am in a passion with monsieur de Sully, it is with good reason, and for a long duration; the very reverse, however, is the case; for, no sooner am I led to reflect that if he remonstrates or contradicts me, it is only for my honour, my greatness, the welfare of my state, and never for his own benefit—I only love him the better, and am not easy until I have told him so."

Although it frequently appeared in public that the king and Sully were not on friendly terms,

the courtiers were by no means the dupes of their conduct. It was currently reported that when the prince and his minister appeared at variance, that circumstance was the effect of a pre-arranged plan between them; and perhaps Henry, who was aware of his own yielding temper, and could not resist the importunity of applicants, secretly allowed Sully to contradict him openly, and to act to a certain extent in opposition to his wishes.

Sully observes that Henry never failed in shewing his gratitude, when persevering industry was manifested in his service—that he uniformly gave additional proofs of his liberality; and, dwelling on this subject, he upon one occasion thus expressed himself when writing to that minister.

"I do not wait to be solicited by those who serve me; you assist me so well in accomplishing my wishes, that I am equally anxious to assist you in fulfilling yours. I beg you to accept twenty thousand crowns from my own privy purse; and let the necessary document for that purpose be instantly drawn out." Upon another occasion the monarch thus expressed himself: "I have learned that you are building at La Chapelle, and laying out a park; as a friend of builders, and your good master, I present you with six thousand crowns, to assist you in completing something that may be handsome."

Henry, having one morning summoned Sully to the Louvre, and shut himself up with his minister, addressed him to the following effect: "Well,

my friend, you have been very expeditious in concluding the terms of your son's marriage. I have resolved to profit more than ever by your services, and to raise you and yours to all honours and greatness; but, to do this, you must equally assist me; for unless you contribute also, it will be difficult to succeed without acting to the prejudice of my affairs, and exposing myself to much blame: a circumstance, I am convinced, that would be opposite to your feelings. My wish, therefore, is to ally you to my own person, in bestowing my legitimatized daughter Catherine de Vendome in marriage to your son, with two hundred thousand crowns ready money, a pension of ten thousand, and the government of Berry, to which I will add that of Bourbonnois upon the demise of madame d'Angouleme, with the domains she possesses, after repaying what they may have cost. I am also anxious to invest your son with the post of grand master on the death of the present occupant of that place, to bestow the government of Maine on your son-in-law, and vest that of Normandy in your own person; for I am well aware that poor Montpensier will not live long, any more than the constable, whose post I shall also hold in reserve for you. But, to accomplish all this, it is requisite that yourself and son should embrace catholicism. I intreat you will not refuse this, since it is for the welfare of my service, and the lasting establishment of your own house."

"Sire," answered the duke, "your majesty

intends me more honour than I merit or desire. You are master of my son's establishment; I can decide nothing for him. The ripe years he has now attained enable him to make every necessary reflection as regards the choice of a religion. With respect to myself, I should be in despair could I think of increasing my honours, my dignity, and my wealth, at the expense of my conscience. I feel that an internal conviction alone would prompt me without the incentives of ambition, avarice, or vanity. Did I conduct myself otherwise, I should place it in your majesty's power to suspect the integrity of my heart, and I should betray my faith to my Maker." —"Wherefore," said Henry, with cordiality, "should I not confide in you, as in such case you would merely act as I have done? I again intreat you to accede to my wishes; reflect well, I give you a month to consider; do not fear that I shall act contrary to my promise."—"I entertain no doubts, sire," returned the duke, "as to the inviolability of your assurances. I desire nothing so much as to content you; nor will I ever fail, so long as it shall be in my power to acquiesce. I promise to think most seriously on your majesty's propositions; and I trust that I shall uniformly give you satisfaction, although I may not perhaps do it in the manner you imagine."

In the month of July Don Pedro of Toledo, the Spanish ambassador, arrived at Fontainebleau, who was a grandee, the constable of Cas-

tille, and related to Mary de Medicis. This nobleman possessed a strong mind; and to the natural gravity of the Spanish character added towering pride, and a petulant habit, which did not accord with the vivacity of Henry, who on several occasions disconcerted the haughty Don by witty and *piquant* sallies.

Shortly after the arrival of Don Pedro, the king, being at Fontainebleau, and showing the ambassador the various buildings erecting there, requested to know what he thought of them. The haughty Spaniard replied, "that the apartments were handsome, but that *the Lord would be very narrowly lodged in the chapel.*" "Oh!" said the monarch, piqued with this reproach, "you Spaniards only know how to give the Almighty a tangible temple; whereas we Frenchmen do not only lodge him in structures of stone, but far better—in the recesses of our hearts; and, if he were lodged in yours, I fear they would prove nothing but flints:" then smiling, the king continued—"Do you not perceive that the work is unfinished; it is not my intention to leave it as it is. There are few gentlemen who have not a chapel in their mansions, and it is not my intention that this should be without one."

From Fontainebleau Don Pedro returned to Paris, where the king, shewing him the gallery of the Louvre, inquired how it pleased him. "*The Escurial, sire, is another thing,*" was the reply. "*I believe so,*" said Henry, at the same

time conducting him to another window commanding a view of the city, when he remarked, "*But has the Escurial such suburbs as these?*"

Henry being well aware, that the Spaniards, for the purpose of forming a league more easily against him, spread reports of his being a martyr to the gout, and that he could not mount a horse, conceived it necessary to convince them that his vigour was by no means diminished. Being therefore upon one occasion in the grand gallery of Fontainebleau when Don Pedro arrived, he marched from twenty to thirty times the whole length of the same, at so quick a pace, and with such long strides, that the Spaniard was completely out of breath, upon which the king remarked: "You see, sir, that my health is by no means impaired, and that I am not such a martyr to the gout, but that if the Spaniards desire war, I shall sooner vault into my saddle than they can place their feet in the stirrups." During another audience, Don Pedro having remarked that his most catholic majesty of Spain would be anxious to enter into a closer alliance with Henry, by solemnizing a double union of their children, provided he would refuse to lend assistance to the government of the Low Countries: "The house from which my children spring," said Henry, "is sufficiently noble to ensure them proper alliances. It is not my wish to cultivate friendships that are forced and conditional; I will not abandon my friends; and

those who are not desirous of my amity may have cause to repent that they are my enemies."

Perefixe states, that the ambassador having one day very affectedly extolled the power of Spain, the king, becoming impatient, at length said, "*It is the statue of Nebuchadnezzar, composed of various metals, the feet of which are only clay.*" Don Pedro, feeling piqued, gave vent to reproaches, and even went so far as to menace the king; upon which the latter, no longer able to contain himself, replied: "If the Spanish monarch continues his attempts, he will soon behold me at Madrid, carrying fire and sword even to the Escurial." Upon which, says *Mathieu*, the Spaniard, assuming a cold and arrogant air, replied: "*That may be possible; Francis the First was once there.*" "*It is for that very reason,*" resumed Henry, "*for I wish to avenge his injury, those of France, and my own:*" to which he added, after a moment's pause, "*Your Excellency will remember that you are a Spaniard, and I am a Gascon: do not let us heat ourselves any farther.*"

Notwithstanding these bravadoes, however, Don Pedro felt the respect and admiration due to Henry's acquirements. Chancing upon one occasion to meet an officer of the palace in the gallery at Fontainebleau, who was carrying the king's sword upon a velvet cushion, he advanced towards the attendant, knelt down upon one knee, and kissed the weapon with reverence, exclaiming at the same time, "*I do this in honour of the most glorious sword in Christendom.*"

Henry, who naturally abounded in beneficence and grace, was no less partial to Don Pedro, who left France charmed with the politeness of the court, and, above all, the generous conduct of the king.

Among other characteristics of this great prince, we must not omit to mention his tender solicitude as a parent; upon which subject we have the following specimen handed down in Sully's Memoirs.

"I feel infinite disquietude, as all my children are here ill. The dauphin, my son, had violent retchings yesterday; he has a fever, accompanied by drowsiness and a sore throat, which leads the physicians to conjecture that he is sickening for the measles; last night my daughter showed symptoms of fever; my son D'Orleans suffers without intermission, some days being worse than others, so that it seems to be a tertian fever; judge, then, whether I suffer or not. I will daily send you an account of the state of my children's healths, be the result what it may; the will of God must be fulfilled, which I shall obey accordingly."

At the period in question, Sully's son was also indisposed: upon which the king despatched his own physician, and wrote every day to that minister, making inquiries concerning the boy; and on several occasions presented himself in person for that purpose. Never was there a monarch who established in the intercourse of

friendship an equality more perfect than was manifested by Henry the Fourth.

The king having one day dined with Sully at the arsenal, on the removal of the cloth the latter ordered cards and dice to be placed on the table, after which he deposited before the king a purse containing four thousand pistoles, and another bag with the like sum, to lend to those of the prince's retinue who, not expecting to play, were unprovided with the means. This act of gallantry was particularly gratifying to the monarch, who thus addressed the duke: "Come and embrace me, grand master; for I love you as I ought.—I find myself so perfectly contented in every respect," added the king, "that I am further desirous of supping and sleeping where I am. I have reasons for not wishing to pass this night at the Louvre, which I will make known to you when I rise from play."

In the month of October the river Loire overflowed its boundaries to such an extent, that the most terrible ravages ensued; so that the loss in men, cattle, castles, houses, mills, &c. was incalculable. Sully, who was then travelling on his way from Olivet to Orleans, was very near perishing. "The whole country," he observes, "presented but one sea, on which the boats passed over the summits of the highest trees and houses that were still left standing; neither was there a single bridge upon the whole course of the stream, which occupies an extent

of an hundred and fifty leagues, which had not one or more arches swept away." Sully, during this melancholy journey, carefully acquired information respecting all the disasters occasioned by the inundation, which occurred instantaneously, and continued for twenty-four hours.

From these statements, and all he had witnessed, he then drew out a memorial, which he despatched to the king; who, without loss of time, returned the following answer: "*The Almighty confided to me my subjects, in order that I might protect them as my children; and I desire that my privy council may treat them as such. Alms upon these occasions are acceptable to the Divinity: I feel my conscience powerfully excited in this instance; therefore let every thing be done which the state of my finances empowers me to accomplish.*"

Sully, to the utmost of his ability, seconded these pious intentions; the towns and ruined villages were not only for several years exonerated from all taxation, but received prompt and efficient succours: in addition to which, the king, at his own expense, re-established the bridges, causeways, and roads. The winter of this year proved so rigid, that it was called the *Grand Hiver*; and Henry remarked, "that the frost was so intense, his whiskers had frozen as he lay in bed beside the queen."

Henry from his boyhood had been accustomed to violent exercises: he was partial to tennis, and very frequently followed the hounds; but without any degree of passion, and merely to

keep alive his physical energies, his agility, and preserve his health. Previous to this prince's mounting the throne, the crime of poaching was punishable by death: he, however, abolished that sanguinary law immediately after his accession. One of Henry's greatest delights was quitting the chase and visiting the labouring man's cottage incognito, where he would remain for a length of time conversing with the honest rustics. It was in this manner he listened to those panegyrics on his conduct, which were dearest to his heart: he would inquire what they thought of the king; when he was requited by the spontaneous blessings lavished upon him, which amply requited him for all the burthens imposed by royalty, and the fatigues attendant on greatness. In vain were representations made to the prince that after so many conspiracies it was dangerous to expose his person to such solitary rambles; his uniform reply upon such occasions was: "*He who is fearful of death will undertake nothing against my person; and he who despises it, will be master of my life. To be uniformly in a state of dread, is worse than death itself; every thing is in the hand of Omnipotence. Let Him only protect me from fools, I do not fear the wise. It is the province of tyrants to be always in fear: the courageous shepherd sleeps in surety; cowards are incessantly afraid.*"

Henry showed no imprudence but in cases where he was personally concerned. No prince ever conducted affairs of state with more wisdom, or convened a council that had to boast men of

more consummate talents. Those persons who shared his confidence the most were Sully, Sillery, and Villeroy, who were naturally gifted with the same phlegm and *sang-froid*; and there is little doubt but the king had his reasons for selecting persons of such a temperament.

One grand object had occupied the thoughts of Henry for the last seven or eight years; and this was an ardent desire to establish a perpetual peace in Europe. Is it reasonable to suppose that such a design, conceived by a mind so just and expanded, and a head so well organized, should be regarded as chimerical? At all events, the most brilliant idea ever conceived by a renowned warrior on the throne originated with Henry the Great. He imagined it would not be impossible to convince those monarchs who are in the enjoyment of every thing which can reasonably be expected on earth, that they ought to prefer a life of purity, peace, and beneficence, to a succession of years passed in cruel discord, slaughter, and ceaseless vexations. Henry was desirous of uniting into one body the whole of Christendom, which he meant to denominate *The Christian Republic.* He intended to commence his labour by driving the Turks from Europe, after which he would have divided the grand republic into fifteen dominions or states of equal force. He would then have established a general council, consisting of sixty persons, to judge and regulate those differences that might arise between any of the confederates. This grand tri-

bunal or senate would have been established in the centre of Europe; in addition to which three other councils would have been nominated, each comprised of twenty persons, distributed in various directions, and subordinate to the grand senate. The land and sea forces were to be regulated for all the states alike, and the respective monarchs were to have engaged themselves by the most sacred oaths to maintain this order of things, and never to arm but against him who should seek to trouble the general tranquillity. Such had been the sublime meditations of this humane prince, whose intentions and whose deeds had no other aim in view but the peace and prosperity of the human race!

The ensuing year Henry sanctioned the nuptials of two princes; first, those of the duke of Vendome, his natural son by Gabrielle d'Etrees, with Frances of Lorraine, only daughter of Philip Emanuel of Lorraine, duke de Mercœur. This marriage, as we have previously stated, was decided upon in 1598; but the king had not strenuously sought its consummation until 1609, on account of the tender ages of the affianced couple. The grandmother and the mother of the princess had been adverse to the alliance; and the duchess of Mercœur being at liberty to dispose of her daughter in consequence of the duke's death, she refused her consent. However, as a treaty existed, signed by the duke, agreeing to the marriage, Henry might have obviated all difficulties by issuing his absolute order; he,

however, uniformly refrained from adopting authoritative measures, except in state affairs, having in no one instance exerted the royal prerogative in cases where he was personally concerned. The king, therefore, had recourse to negotiation when he had a right to exact; and the duchess was at length so touched by the monarch's unlimited generosity, that she freely sanctioned the nuptials.

The second marriage solemnized was that of the prince of Condé with Henrietta Charlotte, daughter of the constable Montmorenci, who was to have espoused Bassompierre, and for whom the monarch felt the most violent attachment, as we have recently had occasion to remark. Upon this event the king gave a magnificent entertainment, at which he appeared in the midst of the brilliant nobility of his court, blazing with diamonds, and assuming all the gaiety of youth in order to please. During these festivities he also disputed with his courtiers for the prize in tilting at the ring, and in performing bodily feats of agility, strength, and address; in all of which he proved the victor.

The nuptials, says De Bury, took place at Chantilly, being accompanied by circumstances with which the queen's emissaries took care to make themselves acquainted. Two thousand crowns had been given by the king for the wedding apparel of mademoiselle de Montmorenci; precious stones to the value of eighteen thousand livres, were purchased for the bride

by madame d'Angouleme, and many other gifts bestowed upon the prince of Condé, in consequence of these espousals: added to this, the frequency of Henry's visits were sufficient proofs of the pretended intimacy that existed between the supposed lovers. The queen and the prince of Condé, equally worked upon by these insidious and malicious reports constantly disseminated, very soon set the whole court in a complete state of ferment.

Henry being hated, as we have previously observed, by Eleanor Galigai and Conchini, they found little difficulty in exciting the queen's resentment against his majesty, in consequence of the new attachment he was reported to have conceived for the princess of Condé; and speaking of those two favourites, the king on a certain occasion remarked to Sully, that he observed in the conduct of that man and woman, designs far above their condition, and in direct opposition to their duty; after which he concluded with these words, that proved as it were a prophecy: "*and my heart tells me that they will at some future period be guilty of great mischief.*"

Mary de Medicis, who was uniformly reserved to her husband even when she had no cause of complaint, was only led from this general conduct to give vent to paroxysms of rage: indeed it appeared as if she knew nothing of the passion of love but its disquietudes and jealousies: she was susceptible of entertaining fears and yielding to despair; but she was incapable of loving or

tasting the refined pleasures arising from conjugal affection. It is stated in Memoirs written at the period, that her passions were of such an ungovernable nature, that, when excited to cry, her tears did not flow; but she *darted them forth* from her eyes. The queen not only loaded Henry with reproaches respecting a passion which he had not openly professed, but she artfully threw out such insinuations as inspired the prince of Condé with all her own suspicions and the bitterness of her feelings.

The Spaniards, in concert with Conchini and his wife Galigai, were incessantly occupied in fomenting a misunderstanding between the prince of Condé and his sovereign. Henry, writing to Sully, on one occasion said, alluding to Condé: "Monsieur, the prince is here making a devil of a riot; you would be in a passion, and feel ashamed, were you to hear the things he says about me; in short, I shall at length lose all patience, and am resolved to speak to him roundly."

Various opinions are entertained respecting the king's conduct towards the princess of Condé: his panegyrists affirm that he never conceived the culpable idea of seducing her; and Sully says the monarch more than once affirmed to him, "*That if he could not conquer his love, he should, at all events, know how to respect the sacred tie which he had formed by sanctioning the marriage of mademoiselle de Montmorenci.*" Be the king's conduct what it might, the prince of Condé, who

was enabled to obtain the most important charges in the state, did not think fit to enrich himself by throwing a taint upon his honour, and becoming a mark of ridicule for the court. The result was, that the prince secretly determined to quit the realm, and adopted his precautions so effectually, that he carried off the princess by placing her behind him on horseback, and in this manner proceeded a few leagues, when a carriage and six horses were in attendance. He then posted to Muret, accompanied only by a few confidential friends, where he slept; and from that town travelled as expeditiously as possible, and arrived in safety at Brussels, where the prince was welcomed by the pope's nuncio and the archduke, who received the prince and princess of Condé with all the honour due to their distinguished rank.

It is impossible to decide whether this conduct was the result of Henry's open proceedings in regard to the princess, or originated in ungovernable jealousy: at all events, it cannot be denied that a more violent proceeding could not have been adopted under the government of a tyrant restrained by no principle of honour or modesty. The prince of Condé could have prohibited his wife from visiting the court by residing on one of his remote estates; in which case the king might have poignantly suffered, but he certainly could not have adopted compulsory measures to cause his return.

We shall now proceed to recapitulate the heads

of what subsequently transpired in respect to Henry and the prince and princess of Condé, as detailed in the secret intrigues of that monarch, which are carefully concealed by his historians.

Praslin was despatched with all expedition to demand an audience of the archduke; during which he spoke of the prince of Condé as of an enemy to the king, who under mere pretext of jealousy had fled the French territory to rebel against his legitimate prince, and that in consequence he was solicited, in Henry's name, to cause his arrestation. In reply, the archduke said he conceived that sufficient had been done in not receiving the prince, but that he did not think he had a right to refuse him a passage through his territories. The fact is, that Condé had not remained in the Low Countries, but proceeded forward to Cologne, leaving the princess at Breda with his sister the princess of Orange, who had conducted her to Brussels, where she was joined by her husband a few days after. The marquis of Spinola, who commanded the Spanish forces in the Low Countries, was dissatisfied, owing to the archduke not having detained the prince of Condé, and in consequence pressed him so much that a gentleman was despatched with an invitation for the prince to return. Spinola sent one letter by this gentleman, and the Spanish ambassador another: in fact, it was obvious the archduke and the ministers of Spain were not actuated by similar motives; the first being anxious for peace, while the latter were desirous of breaking it. Orders, however, which imme-

diately after arrived from the court of Madrid, reunited all parties, as his catholic majesty notified the determination of protecting the prince of Condé.

Praslin, having no order to negotiate, returned immediately to France; upon which Henry despatched the marquis of Cœuvres in quality of ambassador extraordinary, with orders to demand of the archduke, in the name of his master, that he would deliver up the first French prince of the blood. The archduke in consequence offered excuses that were not relished by the king; and the close amity which had subsisted between the prince of Condé and the duke d'Aumale, who uniformly continued inimical to Henry, afforded the latter a feasible pretext for venting his spleen, the real cause of which was not generally understood. The marquis of Cœuvres, finding he could not procure the person of the prince, demanded that the princess should be delivered over to the constable her father, or the duchess of Angouleme her aunt; but the latter proposal was equally unsuccessful, as the archduke replied that he would never dispose of the princess but with the consent of her husband.

Cœuvres, seeing that his negotiations were fruitless, thought of new expedients, and at length determined on carrying off the princess, while some were imprudent enough to think of acting by the prince in a similar manner. Cœuvres was in hopes that, by becoming master of the person of the princess, he could use such dili-

gence during one night as to evade pursuit. Much, however, was to be effected ere he could succeed in his attempt, as it was requisite to scale or perforate the wall of the city, procure proper relays of horses at given distances, while an armed force on horseback was essential in order to repel troops who might be ordered to pursue them. As in such cases it is necessary to confide the secret to several individuals, the mine was in consequence sprung, and count de Buquoi, grand master of the artillery, the first person who became acquainted with the secret, immediately communicated the fact to the archduke and the marquis of Spinola. In consequence a council was assembled, and it was resolved that for safety the princess should be lodged in the palace of the prince of Orange, for which step a feasible pretext was adduced. The prince of Condé, unacquainted with the real cause of this proceeding, freely consented to his wife's change of residence, at the same time exacting from the archduke that the princess should not quit his protection without his, the prince of Condé's, permission being previously obtained. This unexpected circumstance did not damp the ardour of the marquis of Cœuvres, who still determined to insure success if possible; and as the princess was to proceed to the residence of the prince of Orange on the ensuing Sunday, he resolved to hazard the attempt on the Saturday night preceding.

The archduke, who was apprized by means of Buquoi of every thing that transpired, gave

orders to Spinola to make the prince of Condé acquainted with all the facts, from whom the truth had been concealed, fearful lest he should have divulged the affair before such a step was necessary; and it being now time to act openly, they resolved that the archduke should cause the palace to be guarded by a detachment of the body-guard. The prince of Condé became so alarmed in consequence of the communications of Spinola, that he could not preserve the secret, but took all the necessary precautions to frustrate the plans of Cœuvres, and then gave vent to a thousand useless complaints. The marquis of Cœuvres having yet done nothing openly that could compromise his conduct, disavowed every assertion, and then despatched a courier to Henry, for the purpose of obtaining fresh orders in consequence of so unexpected a failure.

The inhabitants of Brussels, offended at this attempt, flew to arms, in defence of the illustrious refugee. This proof of zeal and good-will did not, however, dispel the prince's apprehensions, and fearful lest something worse should befall him, he left the Low Countries and sought refuge at Milan. Count Fuentes, sworn enemy of Henry, received the prince with open arms; and to increase his majesty's chagrin, spread a false report abroad that Henry had set two hundred thousand crowns upon the prince's head, under which pretext he appointed him a body-guard of horse and foot. Historians state that count Fuentes, in adopting this conduct, was not so much urged

from a wish to insure the personal safety of the prince of Condé, as to sully the reputation of the king. There is some reason to believe that the Spanish authorities were not of the same opinion; and it is also said that count Fuentes only treated the prince with this marked distinction to prevent his being gained over by emissaries from the court of France, or that he apprehended Condé might be inspired with disgust towards the Spaniards, and repent the step he had taken. These fears were not wholly unfounded, since, in spite of all such precautions, the prince, as it is reported, began to lend a favourable ear to the proposals made him by the French monarch, and was upon the point of coming to terms at the period when the melancholy death of Henry took place.

When the first news of this unexpected flight came to Henry's knowledge he was engaged at play; upon which he rose in a great passion, and immediately convened an extraordinary council, in order to consult on the measures necessary to be adopted. As the opinions of his ministers varied, Henry sent for Sully, and demanded what was his advice in this affair. The minister having reflected for some minutes, at length stated, that were he in his majesty's place, *he should do nothing*. The king, whose feelings were greatly agitated, remarked, that in so expressing himself he had given no advice at all; upon which the former proceeded to demonstrate that such a step was best, as the manifesting so much indifference would cast the greater portion of ridicule on the

prince of Condé's impetuous proceeding: after which Sully added, "There are certain maladies, sire, that rather stand in need of repose than remedies, and I conceive the present to be one of that description. The prince has sought refuge with the archduke at Brussels; there is every appearance that the court of Spain, always inimical to France, will receive him according to the strong or weak impression his flight may produce here, and that in case nothing but indifference is manifested, he will receive a cool welcome, and the Spaniards will not care to be at the expense of maintaining him. By this means the prince, divested of his revenues, will be compelled to implore your royal clemency."—"How!" exclaimed Henry, "you wish then that a petty neighbouring prince should retain against my will and pleasure the first prince of my blood, and that I should not testify the least resentment? Very pretty advice truly! Neither will I be guided by it. It is my pleasure that Praslin shall set out in a few days, in order to make known my intentions."

The prince of Condé, says Father Daniel, wrote to the king in justification of his proceedings, assigning as his reasons the discontents he felt at court, and complaints against the ministers, particularly Sully; concluding with assurances of the most unshaken fidelity. The constable blamed aloud the conduct of his son-in-law, whom the archduke in the first instance refused to tolerate as a resident in his dominions; but

subsequently consented, in consequence of instructions received from the Spanish court. The prince of Condé, after a certain period, quitted Brussels, where he left the princess, and proceeded to Milan, of which duchy the count Fuentes was governor, who, of all the Spaniards, was supposed to be most rootedly inimical to the French nation. All those histories which give an account of the secret amours of Henry, assert that the flight of the prince of Condé, and his not being able to compass the return of the princess, decided Henry in making preparatives for a renewal of the war. In Sully's Memoirs, however, and by other writers, it is asserted that these belligerent operations had been projected more than a year prior to the disappearance of the prince of Condé, and that the conduct of the latter was in consequence merely adduced as a plea for adopting hostile measures.

The differences that arose between several German princes, relative to the succession to the duchies of Cleves and Juliers, were pretexts for the preparations of a warlike nature that took place in France. The allies of Henry demanded his assistance, which he promised, and in consequence adopted every necessary measure to take the field with all the expedition possible. He merely required of those princes whom he intended to put in possession of the duchies, that they would undertake to preserve the catholic religion in all places where it was already established. Every wise political consideration

propelled the king to determine upon this war, which could not possibly be of long duration, and was unanimously approved in his council after very long and mature investigation.

Every necessary preparation being completed, Henry wrote a letter to the archduke, couched in the following terms:

"My brother—Being unable to refuse my best allies and confederates those succours they require against the powers that seek to interfere in the succession of the duchies of Cleves, Juliers, Lamark, Bergh, Ravensburgh, and Ravenstein, I am on the point of advancing with the army; and as my route lays through your territories, I am anxious to give you timely notice, in order to ascertain from you if I am to proceed forward as your friend or enemy. Awaiting your answer, to the which I pray God," &c.

The king resolved that during his absence the queen should be appointed regent of the realm, aided by a council, the members of which he nominated, consisting of those personages who constituted his own, with the exception of Sillery, whom he destined to accompany him on this expedition.

The favourites of Mary de' Medicis persuaded the princess, that, in order to possess greater dignity in the eyes of the people, it was necessary she should be anointed and crowned prior to the departure of Henry. This proposal gave the monarch much chagrin; who, in consequence, represented to the queen that such a ceremony

would retard his departure for a fortnight at least; added to which, a great expenditure would be required at a moment when economy was necessary, owing to the war charges that were imperiously demanded. Her majesty, however, persisted; notwithstanding which the king felt the greatest impatience to absent himself from Paris, as if a secret instinct had urged him to quit the capital without delay! His uniform docility, however, prevailed, as he found it impossible to resist the urgent and unceasing entreaties of the queen; who, in consequence, gave orders for the preparations necessary on such a solemn occasion, which was fixed for the 13th of May. "The more Henry contemplated the approach of that moment," says Sully, "*so in proportion did he feel terror and dread redouble in his soul.*" He proceeded to the arsenal in order to breathe these secret disquietudes to the bosom of friendship; a sentiment he could not dispel, and the cause of which the most intimate of his courtiers were unable to account for. In a state of bitterness and dejection of soul impossible to explain, the king spent whole hours in the study of Sully, seated on a little low chair made expressly for him. "*Ah! my friend,*" exclaimed the monarch, "*how this coronation displeases me! I know not what it is, but my fears tell me that some signal misfortune will happen!*" While thus expressing himself, says our authority, he kept striking his spectacle-case with his fingers, buried in

profound thought; and on quitting this melancholy reverie, suddenly started up, striking his thighs vehemently with both hands, and crying aloud: "*I shall die in this city, I shall never quit it—they will kill me!*"

Sully, beholding his master upon one occasion in particular more dejected than ever, proposed to have the ceremony put off, and that he should leave the capital instantly. "*I wish to conceal nothing from you,*" said the king; "*I must now candidly avow that it was formerly predicted I should be assassinated at the period of a grand solemnity, which I had commanded, and that I should expire in a coach; and it is on that account I am so fearful.*" "You never before made me acquainted with that circumstance, sire," observed Sully; "and now I recall past events to my mind, I have frequently felt astonished on hearing you cry out when in a carriage, upon the most trifling occasion; and more particularly having so incessantly beheld you intrepid amidst the roaring of cannon and musquetry, and environed by pikes and swords! But, sire, since this idea troubles your mind to such a pitch, put off the coronation to some future period; let us begin our march, and do not for a length of time either re-enter Paris or trust yourself in a coach. Is it your pleasure that I should forthwith send to Notre Dame and St. Denis, to stop all further preparations and discharge the workmen?"—"*I am willing,*" answered the king, whose countenance brightened up immediately at the proposal; "*but*

what will my wife say? she is marvellously bent on this coronation!"—"Let her say what she will," resumed Sully, "yet I cannot conceive that if made acquainted with the sad persuasions which occupy your thoughts, she will think of pertinaciously insisting upon the ceremony."

Sully was deceived; the queen was not to be shaken in her ardent desire, which was vainly opposed by the minister. Compelled at length to state that all his prayers and entreaties had been fruitless, he could not prevail upon the king to use his royal authority; and the prince yielded. He even remarked upon this occasion, that he reproached himself for indulging such apprehensions, and that his good sense prompted him to blush at his weakness: nevertheless, when in private with Sully, the same sombre presentiments took possession of his mind, and he only interrupted the sad and melancholy silence, by repeating these terrible and emphatic words: "*They will kill me, my friend—they will kill me!!*" —Sully's Memoirs, vol. vii. page 381, &c.

The writer of the *Mémoire de l'Etoile* says: "I shall not dwell upon the dreams which it is stated his majesty, as well as the queen, had, on the night preceding the monarch's death, of a house falling upon his majesty in the street Ferronerie," &c. One thing, however, is certain, that about six months before the murder, Henry was at the house of Zamet, where he dined; after which he retired to a private chamber alone, stating he wanted to enjoy some rest; and that

shortly after he sent for Thomassin, who was reputed one of the most famous astrologers of the time; when the prince having questioned him on several topics respecting his own person and state, Thomassin remarked, that it was essential he should beware of the month of May 1610, and that he even designated the day and hour when he was to be murdered. The king, however, ridiculed his astrological acquirements, sometimes taking him by the hair and at others by the beard, in which manner he walked with him two or three times round the apartment, and then dismissed him.

On the eve of the coronation, says Bassompierre, the king being in conversation with that writer and the duke of Guise, chanced to utter something witty, upon which the duke laughed heartily, and then remarked: "You are, certainly, sire, one of the most agreeable men living, and destiny has ordained that we should be in the stations we occupy; but most assuredly if your majesty had been born in mediocre circumstances, I should have taken you into my service, be the price what it might." The king, embracing the duke affectionately, and uttering a deep sigh, remarked: "You do not all of you know me; and when you have lost me, you will ascertain the difference that exists between me and other men."—"My God! sire," exclaimed Bassompierre, "will you never cease to afflict us by these melancholy hints at your approaching dissolution?" After which he began a recapitula-

tion of all that united to render the king happy. He expatiated upon his glory, the love of his people, his good health, the princes his children, the queen, &c.; in reply to which, Henry, with a sigh, only remarked: "*My friend, we must quit all that!*"

The following day, which was that preceding the monarch's death, Bassompierre being with the duke of Guise at one of the windows of the Louvre, they beheld the may-pole fall, which had been planted near the staircase conducting to the royal apartment, not a breath of air stirring at the time. On witnessing this circumstance they looked mournfully upon each other, and Bassompierre remarked: "I would not for all the world that circumstance had happened!"

What tends to palliate this superstitious credence in forebodings is, that the imagination at that period was particularly prone to credit melancholy presages of this description, denominated bad omens, which were rendered striking in a two-fold degree, in consequence of this king's rooted melancholy. It is proved beyond denial, that Henry at this period received numerous intimations that conspiracies were plotting against his life; and it is stated in a note to Perefixe, p. 424, that no less than fifty conspiracies were planned for the destruction of Henry the Fourth.

The same writer, as well as Sully, states that a month prior to his assassination a report was spread throughout Spain, and at Milan, of the king's death, in a printed document; and that

a courier, in his way through Liege, had announced the monarch's having been killed. At Montargis a note was found upon the altar of the principal church, containing a prediction of his approaching death. The report that Henry would terminate his existence in the course of this year being generally disseminated throughout France, it is by no means astonishing that the people who adored him should have imagined they saw fatal prognostics in every direction.

Independently of the above circumstances, the sister of De Villars Houdan, governor of Dieppe, a nun at Saint Paul in Picardy, stated to her abbess: "*Madam, cause prayers to be offered up to Heaven for the king, who is being assassinated;*" and shortly after she cried, "*Alas! he is killed.*" —Mathieu, p. 835. Pasquier states that La Font, provost of Bayonne, in 1608 repaired to the king in order to acquaint him that a conspiracy was plotting against his person; and that two or three days previous to the murder the same individual again advertised the chancellor, that the man who intended to strike the king was actually in Paris; a circumstance that had been revealed to him, &c. Of this singular fact Dupleix also speaks at page 411, under the title of a gentleman of Bearnois; to which Pasquier adds, that a merchant of Douay corresponding with another person at Rouen fifteen days prior to the assassination, inquired in his letter whether it was true that Henry had been murdered: that one of the principal citizens of Cambray said a short time

previous, "*The old prince has great plans in view, but he will not proceed much further;*" to which might be adduced other circumstances equally singular. In the first volume of the Life of Mary de' Medicis, p. 68, are also enumerated other statements to the same effect.

Marshal Bassompierre in his Memoirs, vol. i. p. 292, &c. says, "The king shortly before his death remarked, 'I know not how it is, Bassompierre, but I cannot persuade myself that I shall proceed to Germany, and my heart equally prognosticates that you will not visit Italy.' He also at various times affirmed, 'I believe that I shall die soon.'"

At Douai a priest, a few moments prior to his dissolution, said, "I have just beheld the greatest prince in Europe perish;" to which might be added a multiplicity of similar tales, which may be found recorded in the historians Mathieu, Morzot, and many others. At the queen's coronation, it was remarked that the arms of that princess had been improperly blazoned, as the painter had by mistake annexed to the same the attributes of widowhood. The king chancing to hold upon his knee the duke of Anjou, brother to the dauphin, perceived tears in the child's eyes; upon which having inquired the reason, the young prince made answer, that when at Saint-Denis he had bent a steadfast gaze upon the effigy of one of the kings placed recumbent on his tomb, when he conceived he heard a voice say that the statue in question was that of the king.

Henry, immediately embracing the child with affection, remarked, "*If this be an omen, it can only prove a happy one; because it displays the tenderness of a son for his father.*"

On the day of the coronation Henry took the dauphin in his arms, and showing him to all those who were present, said, "*Gentlemen, there is your king!*"

Every one recalled to mind with dread the grand eclipse of the sun which had occurred in 1608, and the terrible comet, says Perefixe, of 1609: in short, tremblings of the earth, the pestilence that raged throughout Paris in 1606, monsters born in various parts of France (extraordinary and hideous unknown fish, according to Sully, were caught on the French coast); showers of blood, that is to say, rain of a reddish colour; singular inundations, an apparition, and many other prodigies, which kept men in fear of some horrible catastrophe.

The supernatural appearance above alluded to by Perefixe, was an invisible hunting-party, of which even Sully speaks very gravely in his Memoirs, saying, that in the thickest of the forest were heard the cry of hounds and the echo of horns, but that nothing could ever be seen, except *the gigantic form of a black man, which suddenly issued from a thicket, and disappeared in the air.* Numerous peasants, and many of the courtiers engaged in hunting with the king, were stated to have witnessed this marvellous occurrence, which

commonly bore the appellation of *the black man and the grand huntsman.*

On Thursday the 13th of May, the day appointed for the coronation, the queen being arrived, all the court proceeded to Saint-Denis, with the exception of Sully, who excused himself under pretext that his physician had ordered him to the baths. "The king," says that writer, "had the kindness to officiate at a ceremony that rived his heart: as for myself, I continued at Paris. The pain which the coronation gave his majesty had rendered it equally odious to my feelings." On this occasion cardinal Joyeuse officiated, and the whole proceeding was managed with the greatest magnificence. Some one having remarked to the king what an immense concourse of spectators was stationed on the steps of the cathedral, Henry replied, "*This spectacle leads me to think of the day of judgment.*" On the conclusion of the ceremony the king quitted the church before his queen, and received her at the bottom of the steps; when, expressing herself averse to advance the first, Henry exclaimed, "*Come, come, pass on, madam regent, it is your place to command now!*" The monarch then presented his hand, and caused a quantity of gold and silver medals, which had been purposely struck for the occasion, to be distributed among the people. The multitude, which on every former occasion had testified transports of the liveliest joy on beholding the king, was during this day sad and silent; nor even when receiving

proofs of his liberality, was there a single demonstration of joy; no acclamations were heard, nor did a voice pronounce Long live the queen! or Long live his majesty!

The queen was to make her public entry into Paris on the ensuing Sunday, May the 16th, and all expedition was used in preparing for that conclusive ceremony.

For the purpose of getting every thing in readiness at the palace, where the royal banquet was to be celebrated, the parliament held its sittings at the Augustins. Conchini, a day or two prior to the coronation, thought fit to make his appearance in the court of requests, booted, wearing gilt spurs, and with his bonnet on his head. The clerks of the palace of justice, irritated at this want of respect towards the court, rushed upon him, took away his spurs, sword, and hat, and assailed him with blows. One of the queen's pages and some of Conchini's attendants sought to assist him, but they were maltreated, and several wounded; while Conchini himself happily escaped the fray, and found refuge in a chamber of one of the monks. On the ensuing day he preferred a complaint to the king; to which his majesty made answer: "*Do not pretend to pick a quarrel with my parliament; the sword you carry, sir, is not so keen-edged as are the pens of those gentlemen.*"

The day after the coronation, says Sully, the king's sadness so obviously increased, that all the courtiers were struck with his appearance. At an early hour in the morning he despatched Va-

renne, his confidential *valet-de-chambre*, to the arsenal, to acquaint Sully that it was his wish he should not stir out, well knowing that the physician had ordered him to continue at home for two days; to which the messenger added: "The king will be with you by five o'clock to-morrow morning, and he commanded me to add, that nothing should prevent him *but the non-existence of your person or his own*. He further desires that you will await his coming in your morning-gown and night-cap, and that he shall be angry if he finds you have dressed yourself."

After having executed his commission, La Varenne quitted the apartment; when, Sully adds: without knowing why, he remained absorbed in the deepest melancholy.

When the king arose, he stated that he had enjoyed no rest, and felt very uncomfortable; upon which M. de Vendôme supplicated his majesty to take care of himself during that day in particular, which had been predicted as fatal; and that his majesty had better not go forth. "I perceive," said the king, smiling, "that you have consulted the almanack, and heard of that fool La Brosse and my cousin count de Soissons: the former is an old ideot; and you are yet very young and little experienced." The duke de Vendôme then repaired to the queen, when her majesty entreated, through the nobleman in question, that Henry would not quit the Louvre during that day, upon which the prince made a similar reply.—*Journal de l'Etoile.*

It was remarked that on the preceding evening he prayed much longer than usual; and during the night his agitation being overheard, some person in attendance approached the royal couch, when the king was found upon his knees on the bed, praying most devoutly. No sooner had he arisen, than he retired to his study; and as it was found he remained there longer than usual, some of the courtiers entered, when his majesty was discovered at prayers. He felt angry at the interruption, saying, "*Will these people, then, interfere to prevent my happiness?*"— Soon after the prince proceeded to hear mass celebrated at the church of the Feuillans, and, when the service was ended, he continued a considerable time in fervent devotion.

After dinner Henry laid down upon the bed, in hopes of enjoying a little rest; but he speedily after arose, visibly depressed, unquiet, and thoughtful, when he proceeded to pace the apartment with rapid strides: he again retired to his couch, but found it impossible to enjoy a moment's repose. The king then inquired the hour, saying he wished to go to the arsenal and visit the duke de Sully, who was indisposed, and had been ordered to bathe. His indecision, says Mathieu, was extreme: he seemed to be struggling against the secret prognostic that troubled him, and which he refused to believe. He then repaired to the queen; to whom he said, "*I know not how to act: I dread going to the arsenal, for fear he* (meaning Sully) *should speak to me on business, and perhaps I*

shall put myself in a passion." Henry did not wait for any reply; but advancing to the window, and raising his hand to his forehead, exclaimed, "*My God, my God, there is something here that dreadfully troubles me! I know not what is the matter with me; I cannot go from hence!*" Henry at length ordered the carriage, and quitted the Louvre, followed by the dukes of Montbazon and Epernon, marshal de Lavardin, de Roquelaure, de la Force, de Mirebeau, and Liancourt, first equerry. Mathieu the historian affirms, that when Ravillac understood the king had given orders for his carriage, he with an air of exultation muttered between his teeth: "*I hold thee fast: thou art lost!*" At that moment, says the *Journal de l'Etoile*, Vitry made his appearance; when the king said, "*I neither require you nor your guards; for these forty years past I have almost uniformly been the captain of my own guards; I will not have any one to surround my carriage.*" The coachman then having inquired where he was to drive? Henry replied in a peevish tone, "*Convey me from hence.*" On passing before the hotel de Longueville, the driver repeated the former question; when the king said, "*To the cross of Trahoir;*" and on arriving at the spot, he observed in a bewildered manner, "*To the cemetery of the Saints-Innocents.*" By a most unfortunate fatality, Henry, on a sudden, desired that the curtains of the carriage might be raised; for at that period there were no glasses to the vehicles, which were closed in by leather curtains. Had they been

down, the assassin could not have directed his aim, nor struck the fatal blow!

No unfortunate event had been witnessed during the queen's coronation, notwithstanding the opinion that had prevailed throughout the city that some dreadful misfortune would occur. The day having passed happily, public disquietude had in consequence in a great measure subsided; and the populace, re-animated by the presence of their adored monarch, made the air ring with the accustomed acclamations, as he proceeded on his route. Henry, who usually felt touched at these demonstrations of love, appeared insensible on this occasion; neither did he direct a single glance of curiosity on the decorations which were preparing in the streets and public places, in honour of the approaching entrance of Mary de' Medicis into Paris. Thoughtful, and as it were collected within himself, the king remained absorbed in the profoundest reverie, when the carriage was suddenly stopped at the end of the street *Ferronnerie*, in consequence of two waggons, the one loaded with wine and the other with corn, which blocked up the way. Numerous stalls then placed at the termination of that street, rendered the passage very narrow; and Henry the Second, a few days previous to his death, had in consequence commanded their removal: this order, if executed, would have allowed a free passage to carts and waggons, in which case the regicide could not have perpetrated his diabolical deed. The king's foot

pages quitted the vehicle, in order to see the way cleared, when Francis Ravillac, the most execrable of murderers, who had followed the vehicle, placed his foot upon a spoke of one of the hind wheels, on the side where the monarch was seated, and supporting himself with one hand upon the door of the carriage, he with the other struck the king with a two-edged knife. The first blow thus inflicted grazed the second and third ribs, and would not have proved mortal; upon which the king exclaimed, "*I am wounded!*"—at the same instant he received a second stab, the weapon piercing his heart, when the monarch expired on the instant. So determined was the execrable assassin, that he had intended a third blow, which, however, struck the sleeve of the duke de Montbazon, who had raised his arm to parry off the weapon.

Francis Ravillac was a native of Angouleme, where he had followed the avocation of a schoolmaster till the age of 31 or 32. Mathieu surmises that he was of unsound mind; but, according to the ideas usually conceived of insanity, it does not appear from his conversations while in prison, and during the period of his execution, that such was the fact. Gui Patin says, in Letter 122, that Ravillac had a brother who died in Holland; and from a declaration made upon his deathbed it appeared, that in case Francis Ravillac had not succeeded, he would have undertaken to perpetrate the deed.

Of the seven individuals who were unfor-

tunately in the carriage with the monarch, the firm attachment of six could not be suspected, as the only person present who had not uniformly been upon good terms with Henry was the duke d'Epernon. They were, no doubt, all occupied in observing the embarrassment of the different vehicles that obstructed the progress of his majesty; in addition to which, the blows were struck with the greatest rapidity. Mathieu states, "that during the morning Ravillac had continued for a great length of time at the Louvre, seated upon the steps of the portal, where the valets were waiting the arrival of the king. He had intended to strike the blow between the two doors, but he found the duke d'Epernon on the spot where he had predetermined to attack the monarch." This execrable villain afterwards acknowledged he had followed Henry in the morning to the church of the Feuillans, in order to commit the murder; but that the duke of Vendôme, who arrived, forced him to keep at a distance.

Not one of the inmates of the carriage saw the king struck; and if the sanguinary villain had thrown away the knife, it would not have been known who had committed the infernal deed. All the personages in the vehicle immediately got out to prevent the people, who flocked from all quarters, from tearing the assassin to pieces: three of the noblemen stood at the carriage door to succour their master; and one, perceiving the blood gush from his mouth,

and that he was speechless, cried out, "The king is dead!" This terrible exclamation created the most dreadful tumult: the people who were in the streets rushed into the shops and houses, as if apprehensive of becoming the prey of some unknown enemies, and that the city was taken by assault. Every one confusedly thought that he was deprived of his only safeguard, defender, and father; it appeared as if every thing was gone in losing him; nothing was felt but dread, and the most invincible terror. The duke d'Epernon immediately cried aloud, that the king was only wounded; and to persuade the populace that such was the truth, he demanded a goblet of wine: every one at the instant rushed from the houses, and the most affecting exclamations of joy resounded in all directions, while tears flowed in abundance from the anxious bystanders. The duke d'Epernon continued crying incessantly that the king was only hurt: upon which the people expressed a desire to see their monarch; and for this purpose flocked round the vehicle, but were kept at a distance on being told that it was requisite his majesty should be forthwith conveyed to the Louvre, for the purpose of having his wound examined. Saint Michel, one of the king's gentlemen in ordinary, had followed the prince, but was not near the carriage at the time of the assassination. He came up on hearing the noise, drew his sword, snatched the bloody knife from the hand of the regicide, whom he was on the point of killing, had not the

duke d'Epernon interposed to prevent the act. The villain was then confided to proper hands, and led away. During the whole scene every thing continued perfectly quiet at the arsenal!

"Two circumstances were particularly remarked," says Mezerai, "from which the reader may draw what inference he pleases. The one was, that, immediately after the seizure of Ravillac, seven or eight men arrived with swords in hand, saying it was requisite the assassin should be killed; but they instantaneously concealed themselves among the crowd. The other fact was, the murderer's not being immediately conveyed to prison, but placed in the hands of Montigny: that he was kept for two days in the hotel de Rais, with so little care, that all ranks of people were permitted to communicate with him; and among others, an ecclesiastic greatly indebted to the king, who, having addressed and styled Ravillac *my friend*, cautioned the prisoner to beware and not implicate the innocent."

The confusion and piercing screams which at intervals resounded in the breeze, at length gained the ears of the queen. Her majesty inquired the reason; when, observing nothing but sad countenances, and many bathed in tears, she immediately conceived the full extent of the loss sustained. The princess in consequence rushed from her study, and meeting the chancellor, exclaimed, "Alas! sir, the king is dead!"—upon which that grave personage, without testifying the least emotion, replied: "*Your majesty must excuse me*—

kings never die in France." Having then requested her to re-enter the apartment, Villeroy immediately followed, exclaiming: "Madam, we must reserve our tears for another occasion, lest in shedding them at the present moment we render our affairs desperate: it is your majesty who must now toil for us; we stand in need of remedies, and not tears." He then represented that time was precious, and that advantage ought to be taken of the absence of the two princes of the blood, and the weakness of the third, to declare herself regent during the minority of the king her son. In consequence of this address on the part of Villeroy, the dukes of Guise and Epernon were despatched to the parliament; when the latter, conceiving himself a most essential personage upon this momentous occasion, entered the grand hall with that imperious demeanour, for which he was conspicuous, and grasping his sword, which he had drawn from the belt, exclaimed in a menacing tone, and holding up the weapon: "It is still in the scabbard, but if the queen is not declared regent before the court separates, it will be requisite to unsheath it; and I foresee that blood will be spilt." The members of parliament eyed each other with astonishment, owing to the novelty of such an unlooked-for compliment; and continued to preserve for some time a dead silence. D'Epernon soon became aware of his imprudence, and changed his tone, representing to the assembly that it ought not to hesitate in granting

the regency to her majesty, which the defunct monarch had already confided to her during the projected period of his absence; that so wise a prince would not have nominated her had he judged the princess incapable of acquitting herself to the satisfaction of the public; and that it was the only means of securing the peace and prosperity of France, particularly at the present juncture, when every one knew the discontents of the leading personages of the realm: alluding to the prince of Condé, then absent from France, and the count de Soissons, who had retired dissatisfied to one of his remote estates. On the same day, being the 14th of May, the queen was declared regent during the minority of her son, and vested with all the requisite powers and authority.

Towards four o'clock, Sully being in his study, on a sudden heard the duchess, his wife, who was in the adjoining chamber, utter a loud scream, and instantly afterwards the whole mansion rang with the following exclamations: "*All is lost!*" "*There is an end of France!*" Upon which, being made acquainted with the direful event, the duke bursting into tears, cried aloud: "*O, my God, my God! have compassion on us, the State, and France! we are on the point of falling into strange hands!*" Saint Michel then appeared, who confirmed the news, which had been of so appalling a nature as to be in some measure doubted by Sully previous to his arrival. The duke upon this hastily dressed himself, in order to proceed to the Louvre, where the king was laid out upon

his bed. The first person who entered the apartment was the gallant De Vic, who, bathed in tears, had taken his seat upon the bed, pressing upon the lips of his late master his cross of the order of the Holy Ghost; Milon, his first physician, with the surgeons, weeping bitterly, stood at the side of the couch; the grand equerry on his knees at the bed's head, held one of the king's hands within his own, which he kissed with fervour, and moistened with his tears; Bassompierre was stationed at the end of the bedstead pressing the feet of his defunct monarch to his bosom; while the duke of Guise on arriving, rushed forward to kiss his lamented lord. The surgeons who officiated, on opening Henry's body, unanimously declared that they found the whole intestines in such a healthy and sound state as to have given every promise of a continuance of life for thirty years to come.

Sully did not enter the palace until two days afterwards, owing to the following sinister warnings, which he ought perhaps to have despised.

"On passing the street la Pourpointerie," says Sully in his Memoirs, "a man whom I scarcely perceived, passed beside me, and thrust a note into my hand, which I gave to one of my suite for perusal; when it was found to contain these words: '*Sir, whither are you going? The deed is done—I saw him dead. If you enter the Louvre, you will not escape either.*' This note," says the writer, "gave me an assurance of the fact I sought to ascertain, and I could not refrain from tears:

it was also further confirmed in a thousand other places. Du Jon, whom I met near the cemetery of Saints-Innocents, said to me, 'Sir, our evil is without remedy; God has disposed of him. I know it, for I saw him. Think of yourself, for this dreadful blow will produce terrible consequences!' On entering the street St. Honoré, near the cross du Trahoir, a note similar to the preceding was thrown to me: I nevertheless continued on my route to the Louvre, having then three hundred horsemen in my retinue; when I met Vitry, who equally advised me not to approach the palace." At length Sully had an audience with the queen, which was extremely affecting: her majesty testified the deepest affliction; she caused the young monarch to be brought, whom Sully took in his arms, when he could not refrain from uttering the most piercing shrieks, and giving full vent to all the anguish of his soul:—he had not, however, sufficient fortitude to enter the chamber containing the corpse of the monarch he adored, which continued exposed during eighteen days at the Louvre.

The body being embalmed, and placed in a leaden coffin, says Perefixe, was then deposited in a wooden bier covered with cloth of gold, under a canopy, in the royal apartment. After the above period it was conducted to St. Denis, and buried with the accustomed ceremonies.

Sully states in his Memoirs, that he felt shocked at those who, having been honoured by the favours of Henry the Great, could be led to

pronounce the name of his murderer; and he adds, "never did that execrable word escape my lips, neither did my hand ever trace it." Equally faithful in mourning as he had proved in his attachment to Henry, Sully wept the memory of his sovereign and friend to the last moment of his existence: time could not assuage the bitterness of his anguish.

As he was of the protestant persuasion, Sully could not be admitted a brother of the order of the Holy Ghost; in lieu of which he formed an order for himself, which he uniformly wore to the period of his death. This consisted of a large gold chain, to which was suspended a portrait in relief of Henry the Great: he also caused paintings to be executed in the gallery of his castle, representing all the glorious actions of his revered master.

It is singular that, in detailing an event of such magnitude as the assassination of Henry the Great, the writers living at the very period, and immediately afterwards, should have related the circumstances with so little uniformity. Some of the contemporary historians do not even agree as to the number of individuals who were in the royal carriage at the time, nor as to the several stabs the prince received, as well as many other essential particulars. In order to hand down facts in the completest and most faithful manner, we have therefore collected and compressed as much as possible the narratives contained in Perefixe, Mathieu, l'Etoile, the continuation of De Thou, and the French Mercury for 1610.

Many were suspected of being accessary to the death of Henry, and the Jesuits in particular, concerning whom we find the following statement in the *Mem. pour l'Histoire de France, pp.* 320 *and* 321. "Father d'Aubigny, who had received Ravillac's confession, was particularly interrogated by the first president concerning the secrets he had divulged; he could, however, glean nothing from that jesuit, excepting this statement, that God, who had gifted some with speech, and others with prophecy and revelation, &c. had endowed him with a forgetfulness as to every thing that transpired at confession; whereto the father added, 'We are religious men, and know nothing of worldly matters, neither do we concern ourselves or pay attention to them.' 'I, on the contrary,' said the president, 'am fully confident you know enough; that you concern yourselves too much; and that in case you were no more than you state yourselves to be, things would have gone on much better.'"

Henry the Great perished at the age of fifty-seven years and five months, having reigned twenty-one years; of which period the first five were spent in fighting for the conquest of his kingdom, while subsequently he had to maintain the war against Spain; so that Providence only accorded him twelve years to repair the countless evils which forty years of civil warfare, revolts, and those convulsions brought on by anarchy and disorders of every description, had occasioned. Notwithstanding this, at the period of his de-

cease, all the debts of the state were liquidated, the people eased of the burthensome taxations which had completely overpowered them, and agriculture had regained its most flourishing condition. We have before adverted to the efforts made by Henry in support of the liberal sciences, letters, and arts: on ascending the throne the state was indebted in no less a sum than three hundred and thirty millions; and as money was then valued at twenty-two livres the mark, the sum was equivalent to upwards of eight hundred and ten millions of the actual currency; yet every farthing was liquidated; in addition to which he left twenty-four millions in his treasury, the fruits of a wise economy, that never proved detrimental to princely munificence, which was carried to the highest pitch under the auspices of this magnanimous king.

The result of a careful examination of the interrogatories of Ravillac tends to prove that he was a man of heated imagination, who conceiving, according to his statement, that Henry had resolved on declaring war against the pope, and did not take efficient measures to convert the Huguenots, adopted the resolution of assassinating him, whom he regarded as a tyrant that ought to be destroyed; in which ideas he had been strengthened by the sermons of the infamous preachers of the League, who uniformly justified the act of James Clement. Ravillac, when subjected to torture, uniformly maintained that no Frenchman or stranger had been instrumental in

urging him to commit the deed; that the prince had never injured him; and that, if his death had remained unpunished, it would have been productive of no benefit to himself.

Immediately prior to the dissolution of Ravillac, he most ardently craved absolution of De Fillesac and Gamache, two able doctors of the Sorbonne who attended; when he was told that it could not be granted unless he divulged the names of his accomplices. "I have none," said Ravillac; "but give me a conditional absolution: condemn my soul to Hell flames if I have accomplices; and grant me absolution under the proviso that I have uttered the truth." This was complied with, and the wretch was absolved accordingly.

Notwithstanding the most minute research, there appears no certainty as to any particular individuals having been accomplices in the assassination of Henry the Great; nevertheless the events that followed seem to indicate who were the culpable persons.

The terrible catastrophe that awaited Conchini, known by the title of marshal D'Ancre, and his wife Eleanor Galigai, are events that tend to convince one of the truth of this assertion. It is certain we have no absolute proofs that those personages were accomplices in the murder of the king; but, at all events, they regarded it as an act which removed the obstacles that appeared to impede their designs and boundless ambition. They took advantage of this event to attain the

most elevated rank and splendid fortune. "*Concchini and his wife,*" said Henry to his confidant Sully, two years previous to his death, as before remarked, "*have attained to such a pitch of audacity, as even to use menaces in regard to my person, should I commit any violence against their partisans.*"

After the monarch's death, Galigai, through her credit with the queen regent, whom she governed with absolute sway, caused her husband to be invested with the staff of a French marshal, although he had never served in the army; added to which, he was made first gentleman of the chamber and lieutenant-general to the government of Normandy: they also accumulated incalculable riches in lands, money, and precious stones. After enjoying these splendid gifts and honours for a period of seven years with insupportable haughtiness; fomenting two civil wars in the kingdom, and causing the first prince of the blood to be imprisoned in the Bastille; they were both crushed, as it were, by a thunderbolt in a moment. The marshal was assassinated in the Louvre, when the furious populace tore his body piecemeal, and dragged his remains about the city, not leaving the smallest portion for interment. The haughty Galigai, so overbearing in prosperity, who had treated with such disdain persons of the highest rank, was arrested, thrown into a loathsome dungeon, where, deprived of all her riches, she languished in the greatest indigence, reduced to subsist on the prison allowance, not having the means of purchasing a shift;

which she procured from the jailor's humanity, and ultimately perished at the stake by the hand of the public executioner.

In a scarce quarto tract previously quoted, and printed in London immediately after the assassination, written by one Edmond Story, who, from a dedication to viscount Cranbourne, son and heir of the earl of Salisbury, appears to have been long resident in France; he thus emphatically speaks concerning the fate of Henry and his murderer. "That the *sacred person* of so great a king should be undone by the hands of an *unholy villaine*, and his owne *vassaile:* that a prince of the *sword* should be butchered with a *knife:* that *he* who had returned victoriously alive from the head of so many *armies* (where Death keepes his open *shambles,*) should now be robbed of his *life* by the hands of *only one*, and in the peacefull streets of *Paris*, which were yet warme with the glory of his *queene's* late *coronation*,—is a villenie that exceeds (if it were possible) the *merrit* of *damnation.*"

Henry the Fourth, who was twice married, had scarcely any better fortune in his second nuptials than he had experienced from his alliance with Margaret de Valois. Mary de Medicis produced him six children, that is to say, three princes and the same number of princesses. All the male progeny were born at Fontainebleau; the first being Louis the Thirteenth, surnamed *the Just*, who succeeded to the throne; the second had the title of duke of Orleans, but received no Christian

name, as he died previous to baptism; and the third was John Baptist Gaston, duke of Orleans. The eldest of the daughters, born at Fontainebleau, was named Elizabeth, and subsequently espoused Philip the Fourth of Spain. The Spaniards were accustomed to state that she was daughter of Henry the Great, because she possessed a nobility of soul and a firmness of character very uncommon in the female sex. Christina de Bourbon, the second, born at Paris, was afterwards married to Victor Amadeus duke of Savoy, one of the most able princes of his time; the third, named Henrietta Maria de Bourbon, born in the same city, was espoused to Charles the First of England.

Henry further acknowledged eight natural children, whom he had by four of his mistresses, having others also whom he did not openly countenance. By Gabrielle d'Etrees, marchioness of Monceaux and duchess of Beaufort, he had Cæsar duke de Vendome, married to the daughter of the duke de Mercœur; Alexander, grand prior of France, who died a state prisoner; and Henrietta, married to Charles of Lorraine, duke d'Elbœuf. By mademoiselle d'Entragues, marchioness of Verneuil, the prince had Henry, afterwards bishop of Metz, and a daughter named Gabrielle, who espoused the duke de la Valette, afterwards duke d'Epernon. By the countess of Moret the king had Anthony count de Moret, killed at the battle of Castelnaudari, a nobleman possessed of great mental qualifications combined with per-

sonal bravery, and who would, no doubt, have rendered his name conspicuous in case he had lived. Henry had also two daughters by Charlotte des Essarts, a young lady without title, to whom he gave the estate of Romarantin: the first was Jeanne, abbess of Fontevrault; and the second, Mary Henrietta, also abbess of the convent of Chelles.

It is a circumstance well worthy of remark, that no prince ever succeeded to the throne, whose lineage was so far removed from the succession; and it is equally a fact, that no monarch ever united more important territories to the French crown. Henry in his own person added more to enrich the kingdom than Philip de Valois, Louis the Twelfth, and Francis the First combined, who, like himself, were in a collateral line. This monarch united what remained to him of the kingdom of Navarre, the sovereignty of Bearn, the duchies of Alençon, Vendome, Albret, Beaumont le Vicomte, with the rich counties of Foix, Armagnac, Bigorre, Rouergue, Perigord, La Fère, Marle, Soissons, Limoges, Conversan, and so many other territories that it would be tedious to enumerate them by name.

It was stated of the Emperor Henry the Fourth that he had been present at sixty-two combats; whereas Henry the Great of France signalized his prowess in five regular battles, and upwards of an hundred sanguinary conflicts. Previous to the demise of Henry the Third he had to support seven wars, which he happily terminated by

the ratification of the same number of treaties of peace; and in those struggles he found himself, at divers times and places, heading forty-five armies, with no assurance for the support of so overwhelming a burthen but the heartfelt conviction of his own virtue and unshaken integrity.

Henry was no bigot, but a truly pious Christian, says Perefixe, professing sentiments worthy the greatness of the Almighty and his infinite goodness. The prince was in the habit of saying, "that he trembled and became more insignificant than the atom, when he saw himself in the presence of that Majesty which produced all things from nothing, and might equally annihilate them by withdrawing his all-fostering protection; but that he experienced indescribable joy when he contemplated the Omniscient bounty which preserved all men under its wings as children, and kings in particular; to whom he only delegated his authority that it might prove beneficial to the residue of the human race."

No prince was ever found a more religious observer of his faith and word than Henry the Great, who acted according to the beautiful saying of John king of France, "*That if faith was banished from the world, it ought still to be found in the hearts of kings.*" Of this we have given many signal examples in the progress of the life of our hero.

At four o'clock on the evening of the unfortunate day that terminated the earthly career of this great prince, the inhabitants of Paris, who

still continued in suspense respecting his death, were thrown into a general state of ferment. It was observed that all those who issued from their dwellings wandered through the streets and public places, having no other object in view but to ascertain for a certainty the state of the king. One only idea occupied every mind; the ordinary routine of business, and private engagements, were wholly forgotten; or, to speak more properly, being only occupied in thinking of the author of all public felicity, each conceived that he was dwelling upon his individual interest. Every one approached his neighbour to mak[illegible] the same inquiries; strangers interrogate[illegible] another as a matter of course, while [illegible] tenance bore the stamp of the [illegible] that reigned within. During [illegible] momentous [illegible] conducted themse[illegible] timent predominated ove[illegible] became as one family united by si[illegible] and corresponding emotions: At length, howeve[illegible] it was announced that the king was no more! This dreadful confirmation of the greatest of misfortunes paralysed with horror the whole population of that vast city. Men fell speechless in the streets; and many instances are upon record of individuals who suddenly expired on this mournful occasion. Among others was a most wealthy and respectable citizen named Marchant, who had at his own expense erected the bridge of the Change: this worthy citizen expired from excess,

of grief on learning the death of Henry the Fourth. The brave and virtuous De Vic some time after chancing to pass through the street Ferronnerie, where the fatal deed had been perpetrated, was seized with such horror at the recollection, that he was conducted home to his hotel and died the following day; and Perefixe states, that many females refused to take sustenance, and became the victims of their rooted grief.

No sooner was the monarch's death made public than the citizens paraded through Paris, pressing one another by the hands, and exclaiming, *What will become of us?* Others shut themselves up in their dwellings to weep in privacy [illegible]ful calamity sustained. Young people [illegible] from indulging in their accus[illegible] the aged addressed them in [illegible] *have lost our* [illegible] *for you days of* [illegible] *will watch over you?*" [illegible]ooked for in future but storms and [illegible]squietude; Henry had borne with him to the tomb the felicity and heartfelt security of the whole French nation; for the same regrets and melancholy presages were reiterated throughout the whole realm. The affliction of the Parisians, however, very speedily assumed an alarming aspect: this general consternation was succeeded by the fury of despair; women with dishevelled locks rushed through the streets uttering the most frantic exclamations; while the men, be-

wildered from the effects of poignant anguish, talked of exemplary vengeance, named imaginary accomplices, and swore to sacrifice them to their vengeance. The tumult in consequence became so terrifying that the queen was compelled to issue orders for its suppression; she directed the duke d'Epernon to proceed on horseback accompanied by all the noblemen of the court who could be assembled; and in this manner the cavalcade proceeded through the capital, the duke constantly haranguing the assembled crowds, whom he with infinite difficulty succeeded in bringing to reason.

Such was the unbounded love and vene[illegible] which Henry the Fourth had inspired [illegible] generosity almost obliterated the [illegible] great martial exploits; at le[illegible] was effaced [illegible] more wo[illegible] extoll[illegible] of but his humanity, justice, and uniform affability. So many traits of clemency and love for his people were upon record, that no one thought of applauding his warlike deeds. Europe with one accord honoured him with the enviable title of THE GREAT; but his people knew him, and the French still continue to name him only as LE BON HENRI, a designation expressive of every thing that constitutes the grandeur of kings. Never will the homage of posterity equal that which was entailed upon this monarch's memory by a grateful people, truly sensible that their

felicity originated in his indefatigable cares, and that he was justly entitled by his heroism, clemency, administrative faculties, and paternal solicitude, to the united epithets of HENRY THE GOOD and THE GREAT!

THE END.

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